Shepherds

FEBRUARY, 1954

Give GOD a Chance NOW!

Nation-Wide Church Attendance Crusade

To All Chairmen and Members of Local Church Commissions on Membership and Evangelism

Shepherds is *your* magazine. Beamed to laymen who are consecrating their leadership to the winning of souls for Christ, it offers you methods, programs, and stories from the field concerning evangelism. Make *your* church an evangelistic church. We urge you to read the magazine carefully and prayerfully, then adapt its suggestions to your situation.

Pastors! Is your Commission chairman receiving *Shepherds?* If not, please send us his name and address, along with the name of your charge, District, and Conference. We will be glad to see that he receives this journal of evangelism *free.*

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is this practical, 64-page manual on the nature, duties, responsibilities, and evangelistic opportunities of

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by C. Lloyd Daugherty, Jr.

Director, Department of Local Church Evangelism

Shows how to organize the Commission for effective work, how to plan for an effective program, and how to succeed in the task of winning persons to Christ and His Church

25¢ each; 5 for $1.00

TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

SHEPHERDS

For Commission on Membership and Evangelism in the Local Church
February, 1954
Vol. 8—No. 5

Geo. H. Jones, *Editor*
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TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue
Nashville 5, Tennessee

Chairmen of the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism in local churches, whose names and addresses are available, receive *Shepherds* each month free of charge. Pastors, District Superintendents, and District and Conference Secretaries of Evangelism are requested to report these names and addresses, giving the name of the church, charge, District, and Conference.

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NEWS AND GOOD NEWS

FLASHES

...FROM THE FIELD

EVANGELISM is something which MUST BE done and DONE TODAY

CHURCH ATTENDANCE CRUSADE

"SUPPORT THE CHURCH—by attendance"

1. Jurisdiction-wide Crusade—South Central—126 districts—6689 churches.
2. Richmond Area—21 districts—1961 churches.
3. Other Conferences making preparation—Erie, 4 districts; Central Penn., 4; Holston, 11; Florida, 9; West Wisconsin, 3; Wyoming State, 1; Oregon, 4; Idaho, 2; Pacific Northwest, 5; Northwest Indiana, 4; North Dakota, 3; Illinois, 7; Iowa-Des Moines, 6.
4. 74 other districts organizing. Total districts participating at press time—284.

One district obtained COMMITMENTS equal to more than THIRTEEN PER CENT of total district MEMBERSHIP—New York Conference.

SUMMER AND FALL MISSIONS—1953

	No. Held	Prof. & Vows	Transfers	Total
United Evangelistic Mission	9	38,565	23,832	62,397
Spiritual Life Mission	4	2,404	1,466	3,870
Christian Witness Mission	22	441	365	806
Total	35	41,410	25,563	66,073

MISSION RESULTS FOR 1953

	Prof. & Vows	Transfers	Total
United Evangelistic Mission	111,570	68,772	180,252
Spiritual Life Mission	2,404	1,466	3,870
Christian Witness Mission	441	365	806
Total	114,415	70,603	185,081

CHRISTIANITY is not to be Maintained but PROCLAIMED

THE WAY EVANGELISM WORKS

PERSONS—on prospect list—off prospect list—on our hearts—into the Kingdom.

GOING DEEPER TO GO FURTHER

UNIT	SPIRITUAL LIFE MISSIONS										
	Attend	Grace	Devotions	Bible	Prayer	Tithe	Witness	Service	Christian Living	Commitments	Transfers
Louisville W. Phase	36,902	33,565	24,317	30,771	36,877	21,838	29,870	29,357	35,049	586	532
Louisville Phases East & West	56,200	51,053	38,418	48,211	56,099	33,724	46,295	44,568	52,126	1,103	959
Northern N.Y. Conf. Black River–Ontario District	569	471	401	531	626	300	489	463	568	179	59

FAITHFUL WITNESSING—

Mr. Edgar Hiott and Mr. Otis L. Maberry, North Methodist, Indianapolis, by calling once or twice a week for past five years have won over 150 persons to Christ and His Church.

FRUITS OF CONSECRATED LABOR—UNITED EVANGELISTIC MISSIONS

Unit	Date	Prof. & Vows	Transfers	Total
Kansas Area	Oct. 23–Nov. 1, Nov. 6–15	3,319	3,600	6,919
Oklahoma–New Mexico	Oct. 25–30, Nov. 1–7, Nov. 8–17	9,660	7,112	16,772
Central N. Y.	Oct. 18–25, Nov. 1–8, Nov. 15–22	823	705	1,528
Central Jurisdiction		1,258	1,659	2,917
Wyoming Conference		1,422	1,353	2,775

FROM PREPARATION TO OPERATION

Mission Schedule for Spring—1954		1.	2.	3.
Spiritual Life Mission	Texas Conf.	Jan. 17–24		
United Evangelistic Mission	Rock River Conf.	Feb. 12–21	Feb. 26–March 7	
Spiritual Life Mission Youth	Des Moines Area	Feb. 20–26	March 6–13	
Family Life Mission	Lima Dist.–Ohio Conf.	March 7–14		
United Evangelistic–Spiritual Life Misions	Dallas–Fort Worth Area	Jan.	Feb.	March
Spiritual Life Mission	Staunton Va. Dist.	April 25–May 2		

EVEN BEYOND OUR BORDERS

Foreign Evangelistic Missions:

Cuba (Jan. 26–Feb. 4); Alaska (Feb. 10–24); Hawaii (April 20–May 10); Latin America (Latter part of July, first 2 weeks of August); Mexico (August)

HANDY ORDER BLANK

FOR TIDINGS LITERATURE

FOR YOUR CHURCH ATTENDANCE CRUSADE

Church Attendance Crusade Packet

Contains the recommended and necessary quantities of all basic materials prepared for your church's use in the nation-wide Crusade. Order below according to the size of your church. The cost is only 3¢ per member. Each packet contains as many covenant cards as the number of members listed. Churches with more than 1,000 members, or churches wishing more than 1,000 covenant cards, should order either two packets to match the membership or the number of attendance covenant cards desired.

Packet	*Membership*	*Price*
1	100	$ 3.00
1½	150	4.50
2	200	6.00
2½	250	7.50
3	300	9.00
3½	350	10.50
4	400	12.00
4½	450	$13.50
5	500	15.00
5½	550	16.50
6	600	18.00
6½	650	19.50
7	700	21.00
7½	750	$22.50
8	800	24.00
8½	850	25.50
9	900	27.00
9½	950	28.50
10	1,000	30.00

Please send me Packet No. _____ at $_____

A New Book in Line with the Crusade

_____ GIVE GOD A CHANCE NOW! BY CLARENCE SEIDENSPINNER 35¢ each, 12 or more, 25¢ each _____

In the Church Attendance Crusade Packet But Available Separately

_____ **Church Attendance Pledge cards,** 50¢ per 100 _____
The basic card in the Crusade.

_____ **How to Organize and Conduct a Church Attendance Crusade,** 10¢ each; 6 for 50¢ _____
The basic booklet, telling "how" and giving many helpful suggestions.

_____ **Friendly Visitor's Agreement cards,** 50¢ per 100 _____
To use in enlisting the visitors in advance of the Crusade. Packet contains one for every ten members.

_____ **My Church Attendance Record Card,** 50¢ per 100 _____
To be given to every resident member and constituent for him to keep his own record of attendance for three months.

_____ **Instructions for Visitors in a Church Attendance Crusade,** 10 or more, 4¢ each _____
Should be given to every visitor.

_____ **Church Attendance Visitor's Assignment cards,** 50¢ per 100
For listing every member of family, so that visitors may know whom they are to visit.

NOT in the Church Attendance Crusade Packet but very helpful in the program

_____ **Letterheads,** 8½x11 inches, mimeograph paper 75¢ per 100 _____
Letterhead says "Church Attendance Crusade" and contains "Give God A Chance Now" emblem.

_____ **Printed Letters,** 8½x11 inches $1.00 per 100 _____
On the above letterhead, an appropriate letter is printed, ready for signing and mailing.

_____ **Automobile Bumper Strips,** 19x4¾ inches 50 for $6.00 _____
These Bumper Stickers are two colors, one color being the famous "Day-Glo" paint. **Sold only in lots of 50.**

_____ **Church Bulletins,** $1.00 per 100 _____
A printed bulletin, for use on the first Sunday of the Crusade.

_____ **Billboards,** $10.00 each _____
Large 24-sheet roadside billboard posters containing two-color "Give God A Chance Now!" emblem. 19.4 ft. by 8.6 ft.

_____ **Radio Spot Announcements,** $4.00 each _____
Transcription record for use by radio stations, containing brief spot announcements concerning the church and church attendance. Non-denominational.

Tracts Emphasizing the Church

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Testimonies from persons in many walks of life.

_____ **The Lost Day,** Elmer E. Helms $2.00 per 100 _____
Appeals for the spiritual observance of Sunday.

_____ **Why I Joined the Church,** by Homer T. Fort $2.00 per 100 _____

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_____ **Six Steps to Real Life,** by E. Stanley Jones. A helpful guide to Christian living. $2.00 per _____
(Tract-of-the-Month Club members do *not* order here. You will receive the tract automatically.)

FOR YOUR PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL LIFE EMPHASIS

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35¢ each, 12 or more, 25¢ each _____
A presentation of the nature, philosophy, techniques, and spiritual values of tithing.

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Basic study of prayer.
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_____ **The Holy Habits of the Spiritual Life,** by G. Ernest Thomas.
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_____ **Prayer Circles Cards.** Valuable help for individual and group prayer. $2.00 per 100 _____

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_____ **Addresses, Philadelphia World Convocation of Evangelism.** A dollar value. 50 cents each _____

_____ **John Wesley Medallion.** Beautiful memento of World Convocation. $1.00 each _____

FOR THE METHODIST EMPHASIS

_____ **The Methodist Primer,** by Bishop Charles C. Selecman. A concise and popular account of Methodist history, doctrines, organization, and activities. 35¢ each, 12 or more, 25¢ each _____

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35¢ each; 12 or more, 25¢ each _____

_____ **What Methodists Believe,** by the Methodist Bishops. 5¢ each; $4.00 per 100 _____
Clear, concise, conclusive, this 2-color, 16-page booklet contains the Bishops' classic declaration of faith.

_____ **What Every Methodist Can Do,** by Harry Denman. $2.00 per 100 _____
An instructive and inspiring leaflet emphasizing the ways in which Methodists can deepen their spiritual life.

_____ **The Methodist Church,** by James S. Chubb. The origin, beliefs, and membership of The Methodist Church. $2.00 per 100 _____

_____ **How to Join The Methodist Church,** by Karl F. Moore. $2.00 per 100 _____
Answers to fundamental questions concerning membership in The Methodist Church and ways of uniting with it.

_____ **Why Join The Methodist Church,** by Howard B. Warren. Reasons for joining The Methodist Church. $2.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Some Essential Methodist Beliefs,** by Robert G. Tuttle. A 12-page leaflet describing basic Methodist teachings. 5¢ each; $4.00 per 100 _____

_____ **Methodist Membership Card,** a 3-color identification card for the billfold. $1.50 per 100 _____

_____ **Tell Me the Story of John Wesley.**
10¢ each; 15 for $1.00; 100 for $6.00 _____

_____ **Methodist Minister's Packet.** $1.00 each _____

_____ **Methodist Membership Packet** 50¢ each _____

_____ **Methodist Family Envelope.** 50¢ each _____

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_____ **Festival of Faith Tract Series** . . . (God, Christ, Holy Spirit, etc.) (12 tracts in set, each tract $1.00 per 100) _____

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( ) Payment enclosed ( ) Charge to Treasurer ( ) Charge to my account

Rev., Mr., Mrs., Miss **NAME**

Number and Street **City,** **Zone,** **State** **Address**

Church Treasurer

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Please sign, DO NOT TYPE, your name in the space provided above. We have had trouble in several instances in finding who placed orders.
Sorry, no orders on consignment.

I Attend Church Regularly

by John Hefley
Pastor, University Methodist Church
Lake Charles, Louisiana

CHURCH ATTENDANCE is a very personal matter with me. Early in life, at a church service, I confessed my faith in Jesus Christ and united with The Methodist Church. I do not remember very much about that service. I do remember that I promised to attend the services of the church. Naturally, I have always endeavored to keep that promise. Aside from the good that has come to me from keeping my promise, I have found regular church attendance to be one of the most helpful habits of my life.

Church and Values

The church has given my life more value than I ever dreamed that it had. It has declared that I am a child of God and that, as such, my life has an eternal significance. That estimate which the church places upon my life tends to make me strive to take care of the treasure that has been given to me. When I tend to feel that life is worthless I return to the church to listen to what it has to say on that subject. There I hear the church say, "Jesus said, 'Your life is worth ten thousand worlds such as this.' " That estimate of the value of my life fills me with humility. But it also renews my faith in the whole venture of living.

Church Points the Way

The church points me unto a way of life that seems to be desirable. It is the way of Jesus Christ. He is the pattern, and He is the inspiration. It is a narrow way, and a person must keep his eyes on the pattern, but it demands that I should treat other people as I would have them treat me. It is the way of service. It points to the acts of the Good Samaritan as a pattern of life saying, "Go thou and do likewise." The church makes that way so plain that even a foolish person should be able to find it.

Church and Worship

We are told that Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as His custom was. He went there to worship. He felt the need of having fellowship with God. Just so, I have made it the habit of my life to attend the services of my church. I go there to worship, to have fellowship with God. Like the Psalmist of old, "my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Hence, I go to church to worship, to have fellowship with the eternal God. There, in that act of worship, I see visions of the greatness of God. In that act of worship, I become aware of God's presence. The whole earth seems to be filled with His presence. Then I can return to the affairs of life with renewed confidence.

But someone may ask: Can't a person worship God out on the golf course, or on a lake, just as well as in a church service? I doubt it. And I certainly doubt that people do worship Him there. They don't go to those places to worship God. Besides that, the people who claim that nature helps them to worship often find themselves worshiping nature rather than God. One may become captivated with the beauty of nature and forget all his troubles, but that would not solve a single one of his personal problems. Man needs love, and mercy, and forgiveness. Nature does not give any of those. Love, and mercy, and forgiveness are attributes of a person. Man must obtain them from a person, or a personal God, who loves and cares.

In the church service everything is arranged to center the worshiper's attention upon a God who lives and cares. He is high and lifted up. But also, He draws nigh unto those who call upon His name. The altar reminds us of the presence of God. The Cross reminds us of a God who loved so much that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The building, the pews, the pulpit, the Bibles are all meant to help the worshiper center his attention upon God. In the hymns we are able to lift up our voices together in one harmony of praise to God for all His blessings.

Church and Spiritual Refreshment

We are told that Jesus went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as His custom was. So, I attend church regularly to have my life re-tuned spiritually and morally. The violin is one of the finest of all musical instruments. Yet, one cannot play it without re-tuning it. When one tries to play a violin without re-tuning it he finds that the strings have become limp and useless. The same sort of thing happens to our souls when worship is left out and no time is set apart for making contact with God. The strings of faith and devotion will produce no music of Christian living. Once a person learns what a glorious thing real religion is

he will want to renew his fellowship with God regularly.

Like other men I live my life in a rough and rugged world. I live where men toil and sweat and bleed and die. I witness things that tend to destroy my faith in God and in my fellowman. I see people engaged in dirty business. Men kill each other. Men hate each other. Men condemn each other with profanity. Yes, a great deal of life is dirty and mean. Some of that filth is always getting on or in me. I come to feel that I am dirty within and without. Then I go to my church and ask God to cleanse my heart from all unrighteousness.

The church has never disappointed me. Every time I approach its altar and ask for forgiveness and cleansing I feel a breath of life from another world, the spirit world, flow upon my tired soul. And I hear a voice within, saying, "Thy sins are forgiven thee, depart in peace." All that means that yesterday I was defeated on the moral battlefield. I put up a good fight, but before the day was over I was defeated. I compromised with my ideals. I sold my birthright for a mess of pottage. At eventime I knew that I had failed, and I was ashamed. Today I return to my church for worship. There I feel my heart cleansed and my soul re-enforced. Then tomorrow I return to the moral battlefield, and again the struggle is hard. This time I struggle and fight and win. Most of my real moral and spiritual victories have been won with resources which I had obtained in my church.

Joy of Worship

I attend church regularly because I enjoy the service of worship. I can say with the psalmist of old, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the court of the Lord: My heart and my flesh crieth out for the Living God." It is in the services of the church that I get visions of heavenly things. During the act of worship my soul is fed with manna from on high. I enjoy feasting upon the bread of life as it is shared in the house of my God.

Fellowship of Worship

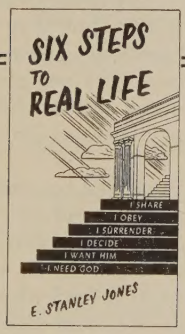
I enjoy having fellowship with the saints of the church. I enjoy that invisible fellowship that comes only through that mystic act of divine worship. There, in the service of the church, the spirits of just men made perfect seem to speak to my heart. Those old heroes of the Cross seem to speak to me about things that are yet to come. Then I am aware of the fact that I belong to a great caravan of believers. They are believers who have conquered kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions . . . waxed valiant in fight and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Then I say to my soul, I am not worthy of such a heritage; but, God helping me, I will keep that faith alive.

I attend church regularly to have fellowship with church people. Many of them have blessed my life with good things. They are the best people I have ever known. I agree with Harry Emerson Fosdick when he says, "The noblest men and women I have ever known, the men and women that I should most choose to be like, have had their roots in the church. The loveliest homes I have ever been in, homes that were bits of paradise on earth, have had upon them the influence of the church." Moreover, if I had children, I would want the influence of the church to fall upon them.

Since I receive so much that is good from my church, I propose to give it my wholehearted loyalty. I shall uphold it by my prayers, my presence, my gifts, and my services.

—Delivered at District Center during Lake Charles District Spiritual Life Mission.

—Reprinted from the
Arkansas Methodist



The February Tract of the Month

SIX STEPS TO REAL LIFE

by E. Stanley Jones

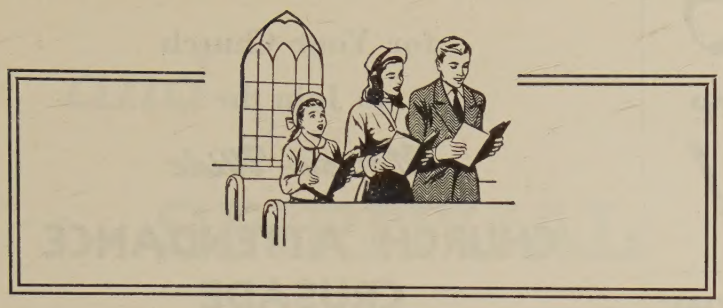
An eight-page tract offering a practical and inspirational guide to Christian living. Should be given to every member and prospective member. Order in quantities today.

$2.00 per 100

(Tract-of-the-Month Club Members will receive this tract automatically at the Club rate of $1.50 per 100.)

1908 Grand Avenue TIDINGS Nashville 5, Tennessee

Church-Going Gives Us a Lift



by Bishop F. Gerald Ensley

Des Moines Area

The basic reason for attending church on Sunday morning is that life has a tendency to run down. If we are not to become progressively worse spiritually, we must pursue just as persistently an upbuilding tendency.

All life, all existence, is subject to the law of diminishing returns. If a man can do a certain amount of work in eight hours, that doesn't mean that he can do twice as much if he works 16 or 24 hours. There comes a point where his work begins to slow down, his interest begins to wane. You can eat a certain amount, but you don't get twice as much satisfaction out of twice as much food. It is the same with life as a whole. Under the hammering of daily existence we tend to lose our enthusiasm for the best.

Our Best Hours

There has been a lot said about those men on the Mount of Transfiguration who wanted to stay up there and build three tabernacles. I have heard sermons that denounced those fellows. But I think they were very human. What they wanted to do was to "peg" their achievement at its height. How natural!

Muriel Lester tells about an alcoholic, a pitiful old woman, who once said to her, "God never made a better woman than I am, but I just can't live up to it." That's true of all of us. If we could just live up to our *best hours!*

However, there is operative in life something to take the luster from our ideals. That's why we have to have this constant waiting upon the means of grace.

Recently, I read about a man and woman who were sent to India as part of the British foreign service. They realized that out there, surrounded by another kind of life to which they had not been accustomed, it would be very easy for their English ideals to sag. So they made this resolution: Every day they would dress for dinner in their very best. They kept the resolution across the years to remind them of their homeland. That's exactly what we do when we go to church. We remind ourselves of that land which is our true home.

John D. Rockefeller once said, "I'm like an old clock that has to be wound up once a week." How true that is of all of us! How foolish it is for anyone to insist that he can't take time for worship! Such a person is like a man who, flying on a great plane, says that he doesn't have time for ground service. Or, he is like a man who, driving a car, says that he would like to take time to stop for gasoline but just can't.

Get a Real Lift

Many years ago Richard Cabot wrote a book, *What Men Live By,* in which he said that four things are necessary for living: work, play, love, and worship. We can get by without working as long as we have a benevolent government. But if we don't have any work we miss something. We can get along without play, but the time will come when we will pay for it. So it is with love and worship. We need both to live wisely and well.

How does church-going accomplish that? It gives us our bearings. It reminds us at least once a week of our real aim.

At this point Psalm 73 is one that we could all read with profit. There was a man who went to the house of God in a low mood, envious over the prosperity of the wicked. He saw those about him in life who were proud, violent, corrupt, oppressive, arrogant, disrespectful to God, obnoxious. Yet, he says, they were successful! They didn't have trouble as other men had. Their health was good. They had more of this world's possessions than other men had. On the other hand, the Psalmist felt as though he had been clean and innocent in vain. That plagued him all day long. He got to the place where he was ready to toss all his ideals overboard and go with the rest.

Then there came to him this experience in the Temple. He was low and careless, he says, "until I went into the sanctuary of God. Then understood I their end." He realized that he had been guilty of superficial thinking. Did he take into account only the present authority of the wicked? He now thought of how they would come out. He saw that God sets the wrongdoers in slippery places, that at last things are desolate for them.

In church we are reminded of *who* we are. How much of our trouble in homes, in organizations, among the nations, arises from the fact that some people are unwilling to be humble!

What Can We Do?

What can we do to make the experience of churchgoing worthful? What can we do from the standpoint of the worshiper?

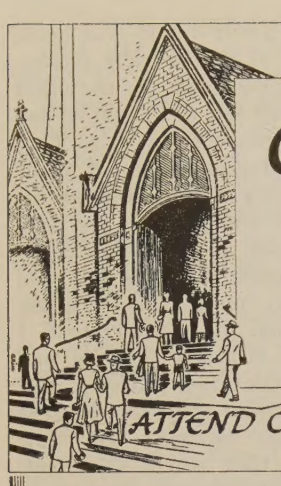
We must bring a proper mood to the house of God.

First, we must bring a religious mood—the mood of reverence, the mood of faith ("He that cometh to God must believe that he is")—the mood of moral sincerity, the mood of need.

Second, we must bring a positive mood. We must come, not to criticize or to analyze, but to affirm. We must come willing to see the best and to believe the best. We won't get anything out of church if we go looking for mistakes in the preacher's grammar or theology, in the disharmonies of the choir, or in the offensive architecture. We must come in a participative mood (and this is part of the positive mood) rather than sit on the sidelines as a spectator. We must sing the hymns, join with the responsive reading, pray with the pastoral prayer.

Finally, there is the objective mood. How truly the Master spoke when He said of that Pharisee who went to the Temple, "He stood up and *prayed thus with himself!*" It was a purely suggestive transaction which rose no higher than his own swollen head.

The business of the church isn't to bring our troubles with us, to brood over our hurts, to rehearse our worries. Nor do we go to worship the minister. We go to church to worship God. This must be our sincere object in attending divine worship in the House of the Lord.



Give GOD a Chance NOW!

There Is Still Time

for Your Church

to Join the

Nation-Wide

CHURCH ATTENDANCE CRUSADE

January to Easter, 1954

Probably there is nothing that, week in and week out, will build up a person spiritually and tie his love and loyalty to the church as will regular church attendance.

Air Mail Your Order for Essential Materials Today!

CHURCH ATTENDANCE CRUSADE PACKET

Packet	*Member-ship*	*Price*	*Packet*	*Member-ship*	*Price*	*Packet*	*Member-ship*	*Price*
No. 1	100	$ 3.00	No. 4	400	$12.00	No. 7	700	$21.00
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No. 3	300	9.00	No. 6	600	18.00	No. 9	900	27.00
No. 3½	350	10.50	No. 6½	650	19.50	No. 9½	950	28.50
						No. 10	1,000	30.00

These packets contain the necessary and recommended quantities of all basic materials to be used in your church's Attendance Crusade. Order according to the size of your church.

Churches with more than 1,000 members, or that want more than 1,000 attendance covenant cards, should order two packets to match the membership, or the number of attendance covenant cards desired.

VERY IMPORTANT

These are not in the packet but are very important.

Attendance Registration Cards

50¢ per 100; $2.25 for 500; $4.00 per 1,000

For best results you will need to register the attendance, on several Sundays, of each person present. For individual registration, order large supply.

These helpful materials are not in the Packet. Order them separately, and get extra results.

Church Bulletins, $1.00 per 100

A printed bulletin, for use on the first Sunday of the Crusade. Delivered flat, so that inside of bulletin may be mimeographed or printed locally with local church program announcements.

Automobile Bumper Strips, 19x4¾ inches 50 for $6.00

These Bumper Stickers are two colors, one color being the famous "Day-Glo" paint. The message reads, "Give God a Chance NOW! Attend Church Every Sunday." **Sold only in lots of 50.**

1908 Grand Avenue **TIDINGS** **Nashville 5, Tennessee**

SUNDAY *and* SPIRITUAL STARVATION

by James R. Webb, Jr.
McRae, Georgia

"Are you starving yourself?"

The man who brought that question to my mind certainly did not *look* starved. As I talked with him, he lay in the swing on the porch of his country home. His hefty 200 pounds made the chains creak noisily over his head as he swung himself by means of one dragging foot. Lolling there in the shade, he appeared exceptionally fat and well nourished.

"Why don't you load the family in the car next Sunday and come and worship with us in the church?" I asked.

A Day of Rest

"Preacher," he objected, "Sunday is the only day I have in the whole week to rest." I noted to myself that at the moment he seemed to be doing all right in that direction on a weekday afternoon.

"Yes," he went on in a rather pious tone, "the Bible says that the Sabbath should be a day of rest. It's my only day to get some physical relaxation."

"It's also your only day to worship in God's house," I replied. I could see, however, that the thought did not register with him.

To him, worship was not at all important. But rest and nourishment for his body were all-important.

That conversation set me thinking.

How many people, I wonder, are starving themselves spiritually?

Now this man, like so many others, would not think of doing without his daily meals. When the church bells rang on Sunday, he was always absent. But when the dinner bell rang on any day of the week, he was always present. He took time, regularly, to feed his body. Yet he never took time to feed his soul.

Bodily Food

Bodily nutrition is a popular subject these days. We are all vitamin-conscious. Our bread, milk, and a multitude of other foods are fortified to give us greater vim and vitality.

No man in his right mind would go home for lunch and say, "Wife, I'm tired of being so strong and healthy. I want to have flabby muscles, brittle bones, bad teeth, and a severe case of pellagra. I don't want to feel well or energetic any longer. So just serve me foods that have no nourishment in them!"

No intelligent man, I say, would do that. Yet many a person who thinks that he is intelligent is doing something even more absurd and tragic. He is starving his spiritual self! Deliberately or not, he is neglecting to feed his own soul.

For our souls need nourishment just as much as our bodies need it. "Man shall not live by bread alone," Jesus reminds us, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Spiritual sustenance, in the form of great truths, inspiring thoughts, noble purposes, and kindled ideals, is just as necessary to the human spirit as food is to the human body.

A Spiritual Diet

Strong minds are not developed on a diet of trashy literature, or vulgar and trivial thoughts, or the frivolous fare so often found on screen, stage, or radio. By contrast, great Christian literature —and especially the Bible—furnishes nourishment which replenishes the mind and strengthens the sinews of thought. We do not become spiritually strong by feeding our souls in that trough of trivialities which our daily existence could so easily become, but by partaking of the great truths of God from the King's High Table.

Neither do these spiritual vitamins become ours in a moment of time, as one would swallow a convenient capsule. They are ours only when we take time to worship and meditate upon God's Word. We must daily "Practice the Presence of God" and feed our inner selves upon "The Bread of Life."

Consequences of Neglect

Perhaps the reason many people take no time for spiritual nourishment lies in the fact that the consequences of their neglect are not immediately manifest to the outward eye. The body, on the other hand, shows visible results of malnutrition. If, by some strange magic, our souls could be made as visible as our bodies, would not many of them appear stunted, dwarfed, misshapen,

and grotesque because of spiritual malnutrition? Would not many a poor human spirit reflect the fact that it had not been fed for a long, long time?

Nutritional Time Bomb

The science of dietetics refers to a very vital factor called "the nutritional time bomb." This is a concept sometimes used by medical science to describe what happens to the human body when a person's food has habitually lacked some element essential to health. But in such a case, the lack is not immediately apparent. The deficiency continues for years, with no visible warning of its presence. Then, one day, time runs out and "the bomb" goes off! The long hidden deficiency suddenly manifests itself in illness.

In the realm of the spirit there is also such a thing as a "nutritional time bomb." When a person neglects to feed his inner self, the results may not be immediately evident. So gradual is the inner change that he may not realize his growing spiritual deficiency.

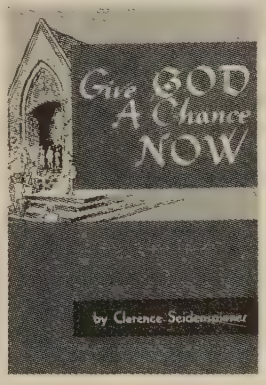
But then, one crucial day, there suddenly comes the time of great testing. Some great and tragic sorrow buffets his soul. Some moral challenge tries him, as by fire. And he realizes, with sudden despair, how inadequate are his spiritual resources. But he knows that it is now too late to remedy the vital lack.

Jesus indicated this truth when He said to His disciples, "The bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." And they said to Him, "Lord, evermore give us this bread."

True Disciples

If we are true disciples of His—true Christians—that will be our answer, too. When we fail to attend church, when we fail to pray, when we do not regularly read God's Word, when we do not nourish our minds on the truths of the faith, then, we need honestly to ask: "Are we starving ourselves?"

This article available from Tidings in tract form at $2.00 per 100.



A New Book

GIVE GOD A CHANCE NOW!

by Clarence Seidenspinner

This 64-page, "down-to-earth" volume describes the need and manner of "giving God a chance" in our personal lives, our homes, our communities, and our churches. With stirring illustrations, the author appeals eloquently for the kind of spiritual experience which makes Christianity an irresistible force in an age of confusion and fear. Every pastor will want every member to read this significant book on letting God work creatively *now* through us.

35c each; 12 or more, 25c each

Here are some vital tracts to give to your people during the great Nation-Wide Church Attendance Crusade

Why I Go to Church
compiled
$2.00 per 100

A new leaflet containing testimonies from persons in many walks of life.

Let's Go to Church
Paul E. Folkers
$1.00 per 100

A four-page folder outlining the Church's contribution to the individual.

Church-Going a Pleasure
Ray W. Ragsdale
$2.00 per 100

Helpful hints on church attendance.

I Go to Church Sunday
Geo. W. Crane, M.D.
$1.50 per 100

A prominent psychologist and newspaper columnist testifies to the spiritual enrichment obtained through church attendance.

1908 Grand Ave. TIDINGS Nashville 5, Tenn.

PASTORS! COMMISSIONS ON MEMBERSHIP AND EVANGELISM!

Cooperate with Your District Superintendents in the Following Evangelistic Plan

A Nation-Wide Crusade

(Requested by the Bishops)

"With a consciousness of the obligation of the Church to that larger number of children, youth, and adults who do not attend church regularly, *the Council of Bishops urges all pastors and churches to unite in a Church Attendance Crusade, beginning January 1, 1954, and ending on Easter Sunday, April 18.*" (Excerpt from resolution, passed by the Council of Bishops at Omaha, May, 1953).

The Council of Bishops asked the General Board of Evangelism to lead this Crusade.

A Challenging Slogan

"Give GOD a Chance Now!" Nothing will help cause the average person to "Give God a Chance Now" so much as will a regular visit to the house of God at least once a week.

A Logical Time

January to Easter, 1954. Individuals seem to be more susceptible to Christ and the message of the Cross during the pre-Easter season.

A Vital Purpose

- Increase regular church attendance
- Activate indifferent members
- Exalt the place of corporate worship in Christian experience
- Recapture the power of Christian fellowship

A Workable Plan

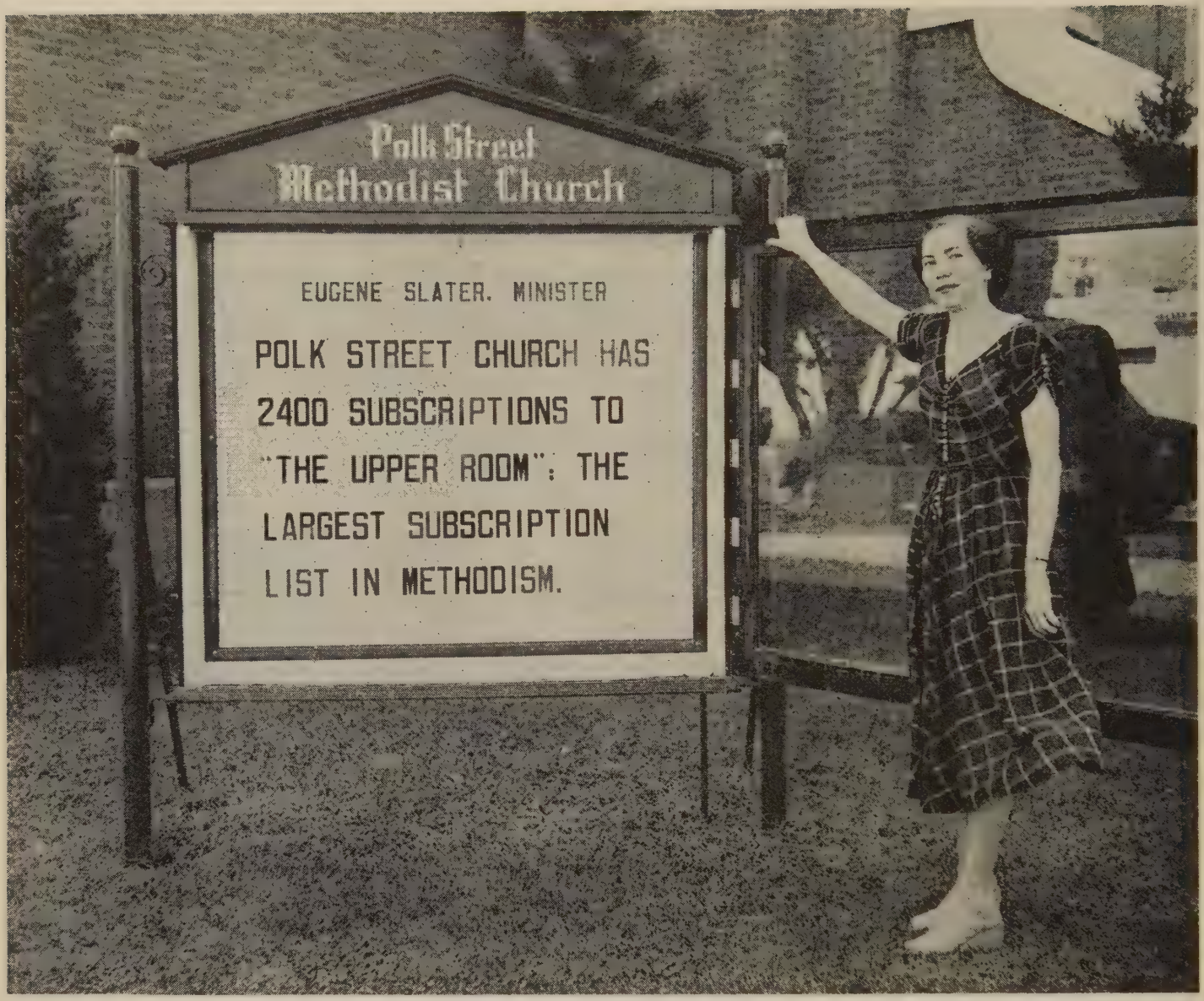
- Release promotion and publicity through all media in local community
- Make systematic visitation on church and non-church families
- Distribute helpful books and leaflets emphasizing the Church
- Adopt or adapt the "Fill a Pew Plan," "Each One Bring One," etc.

A Simple Procedure

- Order the packet for your sized church and use the full program outlined in the booklet, "How to Organize and Conduct a Church Attendance Crusade," which is in the packet (See p. 4 and use order blank in this issue of *Shepherds.*)
- Follow the organization guide for setting up the policies and the four committees
- Use church attendance pledge cards and the church attendance chart, which are in the packet, to encourage people to come

A Fine Opportunity

This is your finest opportunity to share in a nation-wide church attendance emphasis. Make certain that your church participates in it wholeheartedly. Your spiritual returns will be in proportion to the zeal, prayer, and work invested. For further information see December and January *Shepherds.*



Miss Jane Kern, Director of Religious Education, points to bulletin board in front of Polk Street Methodist Church

Polk Street Methodist Church

Those Who Serve Need

THIS is the story of a church that, in seeking to serve, realized its own deep need. Desiring to serve more effectively in its own community and beyond, it was necessary first to strengthen and deepen the spiritual ties that bound them together in Christian Fellowship.

As every churchman knows, an expanding church program means an expanding budget and a danger that the financial program will appear to overshadow the spiritual program. It was here that Dr. Eugene Slater, pastor; Rev. Roy Percival, associate; and key laymen such as Carl W. Miller, chairman of the board, worked out the program that has brought such tremendous results to Polk Street Church, Amarillo, Texas.

A steadily increasing church membership, now more than 4,500, with a rapidly enlarging church school, required additional space. Geared to every age level from the nursery

Carl W. Miller, chairman of the official board, discusses with Eugene Slater, pastor, the ministry of *The Upper Room*.

A meeting of the official board. Of the 129 members of the board, 89 are tithers.

Roy Percival, associate pastor, and two members of the Woman's Society of Christian Service discuss the world-wide ministry of *The Upper Room*.

Those Who Serve Need (*Continued*)

and cradle roll to the XYZ club—Xtra Years of Zest—composed of older members who meet weekly for service and recreation, the enlarged program required more trained leadership.

The adoption of the Parish Cultivation plan—placing a copy of THE UPPER ROOM in each home for which the church has some responsibility—has proved to be an important part of the program. Through the daily devotions of THE UPPER ROOM, the church ministers in every home every day. Each day every member of the church is urged to join in a spiritual fellowship by sharing the same Bible readings, the same meditations, and the same prayers. THE UPPER ROOM became the symbol and the medium for daily fellowship for the whole church family.

Dr. Roy Percival says the Parish Cultivation plan is an important part of the annual every member canvas. He explains that for the finance committee it is a program of enlightened self-interest. THE UPPER ROOM, day by day, emphasizes the ministry of Polk Street Church in every home and for every individual. It is a powerful adjunct to the Commission on Membership and Evangelism. The world fellowship program of THE UPPER ROOM is a continuing stimulus to the work of the Commission on Missions.

The building program called for an "activities" building costing $350,000. This beautiful building was completed this past summer. The expense is being met in the budget. The budget is raised by a systematic cultivation of tithing, which has already enlisted 83 of the 129 stewards and a growing percentage of the total membership.

Copies of THE UPPER ROOM in Spanish are also provided by the church for the Wesley Community center—a conference project—and in English for a church mission.

The ministry of THE UPPER ROOM is an integral part of the enlarging ministry of Amarillo's Polk Street Methodist Church. Church leaders are enthusiastic about the Parish Cultivation plan for its spiritual benefits. They are convinced that it pays rich dividends in terms of expanding interest in the total program of the church and that they must continue it in terms of enlightened self-interest.

AN EVANGELIST FOR CHRIST

by Oscar Thomas Olson, Pastor
Epworth-Euclid Methodist Church
Cleveland, Ohio

IN A DAY of specialization, when we tend to do things in the mass and by division of function, we do well to keep ever in mind the sharp and far-reaching distinction between the Roman Catholic ideal and the Protestant ideal and to hold bright and clear before our minds the great truth that Christ calls every one of us to be an evangelist for Him.

In one of the early centuries of the Church the authorities of the Church forbade any but ordained ecclesiastics to take part in the singing at the church services. So it came about that architecturally church structures took on the chancel type of choir, with the participants in worship near the altar.

Then, when we come down a few hundred years into the Middle Ages, practice had made the word "religious" mean monks and nuns—those separated and divorced from the normal world of life.

It is part of the precious Protestant heritage that we reject all this idea of a special, separated order of servants of God. We boldly and frankly declare that all Christians are priests. Everyone of us prays—not just one man at the altar. Everyone of us sings—not just a few people in the choir. Everyone of us is an evangelist—not just a few gifted speakers or workers.

It is through private and personal evangelism that the Kingdom of God has had its periods of finest growth. Dwight L. Moody put it in picturesque phrase when he said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is hand-picked." It has always been so ever since the proposal of Jesus was first made.

How did Jesus' company of disciples and followers start? John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and spoke of Him. Two men heard and followed. Each of them then went and brought his brother to Jesus. Jesus called Philip, and at once Philip went after his friend Nathaniel.

Jesus healed the demoniac. He touched this disturbed and hard-driven man and brought to him a new self-possession. Naturally, the man begged to be allowed to go with Jesus, but the Master said to him: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

I wonder if you have ever noticed the outcome of that situation. The people of that district had asked Christ to leave. You see He had seriously interfered with business; and, of course, then as now business must not be interfered with!

But when Jesus returned that way they ran out to meet Him and listened to His teaching. Such a reception may have been due to this man's testimony concerning the work of Jesus.

The jaded, broken, despised woman of Samaria went away from that famous well-side conversation with Jesus and shared the insights and understandings that had come to her. That was one of the places where Christianity made a marked impression a few years later.

Historians have speculated and debated as to the cause or causes for the astonishingly rapid spread of Christianity in the early years. There is one simple, direct cause. Every Christian talked about his faith and was an evangelist for Christ. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." The account significantly says that the apostles stayed in Jerusalem. It was the rank and file of the Church that did the work of evangelism.

O that the spirit of God might break through our reserve, our sophistication, our indolence, our indifference, or whatever inhibition is upon us, and make us hear the voice we are bound to obey saying to each one of us: "Go to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

Two Outstanding Mementos of the Great Convocation of Evangelism in Philadelphia June 26-28, 1953

Addresses and General Proceedings of the World Methodist Convocation

A Dollar Value. 50¢ per Copy

Beautiful Gold Medallion

bearing the likeness of John Wesley appended to a rich purple ribbon. **$1.00 each**

1908 Grand Ave. **TIDINGS** **Nashville 5, Tenn.**

The Commission on Membership and Evangelism

"Project for the Month"

of February Is

A FELLOWSHIP OF WITNESSES

for the MEMBERS of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism

by C. Lloyd Daugherty, Jr.

Director of Local Church Evangelism

THE Lenten period is traditionally a time for the local church to have a fine evangelistic program which includes:

1. A thorough search for prospective members
2. An intensive visitation evangelism effort
3. Special Sunday evening services and/or weekday and/or night services during Holy Week
4. Church membership classes (at least for the youth)
5. A special loyalty attendance program for all church and church school services and meetings during Lent.

Many churches consider these as basic minimum "musts" in their year-by-year evangelistic emphasis.

We urge that the Commission on Membership and Evangelism spare no effort to make these programs eminently successful. Let *thoroughness* be the keynote—in planning, promotion, and follow-through. Order supplies and necessary or helpful materials *early* to avoid disappointment in delivery. If the General Board of Evangelism can assist any local church in any way with these programs, please write immediately.

HOWEVER

We believe that this Lenten period would also be a good time for the members of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism to deepen *their own* spiritual life and to bear their own *personal* Christian witness in a new and perhaps more extensive way than ever before. If this Commission is to fulfill its responsibility for spiritual leadership in the local church, its individual members should be spiritual leaders and should lead personally in things pertaining to the spiritual life. We suggest that the members of this Commission make an agreement with each other, and with God, to do one of the following things as a special *Personal Christian Witness* during Lent:

- Pray for the Church and for every member of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism by name each day until Easter. It would be helpful if each member could know when the other members are praying for him. Strive to spread the prayer time over the whole day as far as possible. Give each Commission member a written list of the names of Commission members. On this list provide a place for inserting the time of day or night when each person will lift up his prayer.

- Conduct at least one CCC (Christ Centered Conversation) with someone each day. Such conversations can begin with "Where do you go to Church?", "What does Lent mean to you?", "What difference do you think being a Christian makes in a person?", "What change would come over our world if it were to become more Christian?", "Do you think it is important for people to go to church school?". Consider the possibility of supplementing the regular "Two-by-Two" Visitation Evangelism programs during this period with a "Won-by-One" program. In conducting a CCC, please remember that the basic rules for being a "good conversationalist" still hold. It is more important to be a good listener than to be a good talker. Keep the conversation going with questions and sympathetic attention rather than with lengthy speeches. Keep the conversation Christ-centered. Conduct it in the spirit of Christian love and concern. Help people, but do not drive them to make a Christian decision.

- Enlist individuals in an experiment in Christian faith through the experience of tithing during Lent. Join faith-force with those of the Commission who are already tithers. Ask them to tell the Commission about the joy and satisfaction of their experience in this phase of personal Christian faith and witness.

- Ask the minister to outline a course of Bible reading for the members of this Commission during Lent. He may suggest "a chapter a day" in one or more of the epistles, followed by a "chapter a day" in one of the Gospels; or he may suggest certain verses from the Psalms and certain verses from the Gospels for each day. He will be happy to select significant and appropriate passages for this group to read and study. There is a blessing which comes to people who read the same passages of scripture each day.

- Distribute five or ten good tracts a day. It would be helpful for the minister to assist in the selection of these. We recommend such tracts as: "I Will Follow Christ," "What Every Methodist Can Do," "Toward a Victorious Life," "Too Busy for God," "What Christ Offers You," and "Some Secrets of Prayer" (available from TIDINGS at $2.00 per 100). Larger booklets (available from THE UPPER ROOM at 15¢ each, 10 for $1.00, 100 or more 7¢ each) are *Emergency Rations* (something to send to the men and women in service—a spe-

cial reminder), *How to Find Prayer More Meaningful, Making God Real, More Power to You,* and *Pray for Others.* These tracts should be delivered *personally* by the Commission members, with a word of urgent invitation for their friends to *read* them. This could well be the beginning of the Christ Centered Conversation recommended above. The point here is not so much a *wide* distribution of the tracts (which could more easily be accomplished by mail or by use as bulletin inserts at church), but the highly effective *personal* and *selective* distribution of them. How and by whom tracts are distributed may be as important as the content of the tracts themselves.

- Pledge personal loyalty in attendance at Prayer Meeting each week. Or in the absence of such a service, ask the pastor or chairman of the Commission, or some selected person or persons, to conduct special prayer meetings for the members of this Commission. This should be as an addition to, rather than substitute for, the daily prayer plan suggested above.

- Read at least one book during the month. The members of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, as the leaders of the church's effort to win men, must be well informed on the Church and Christian life. Especially helpful are *A Primer for Churchmen,* by G. Ernest Thomas; *The Beliefs of a Methodist Christian,* by Clinton M. Cherry; and *A Primer for Christian Living,* by R. L. Hunt. (These books are available from TIDINGS at 35¢ each, 12 or more, 25¢ each.)

A WORD OF CAUTION!

It will be the natural thought of many that what is good for the members of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism during Lent would also be good for the congregation at the same time. This is unquestionably true. But it is also true that if the members of this Commission have the thrilling experience of participating in this "select" Fellowship of Witnesses, they will be the better able to conduct and enlist participation in a much more thorough program of a similar nature among the wider membership of the church. If "experience is the best teacher," and if "teacher" is to stay "one lesson ahead of the class," it follows that the members of this Commission should have this experience first—and together—so that *on* that experience and *from* that experience they will have both the development of wisdom and the contagion of enthusiasm to project the program successfully among the congregation. Some of the subsequent "Projects of the Month" will be based on the assumption that the Commission on Membership and Evangelism has had the experience of this project together—and will assist them to take this kind of Spiritual Life Witness to the congregation. This is a conscious attempt to develop personal spiritual leadership through "contagion."

Look for next month's "Project"—A PRAYING CHURCH

A PRIMER OF PRAYER

by Charles M. Laymon

35¢ each; 12 or more, 25¢ each

Helpful suggestions for deepening the prayer life.

PRAYER CIRCLES CARD

(Compiled)

$2.00 per 100

Contains scripture, prayer suggestions, and a place for one's personal prayer list.

An excellent guide to a richer prayer experience.

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Literature

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tennessee

A TOTAL EVANGELISTIC MISSION for a Local Church During Lent

by J. Lester McGee

THE Lenten season is not only the logical period, but also the psychological time, for an all-out evangelistic effort in the local church. These seven Sundays, including Easter, fit perfectly into a combined Spiritual Life Mission and United Evangelistic Mission emphasis.

1. Promotion

Of course, the preliminary work in promotion and publicity, enlisting visitors, compiling lists of prospects, preparing materials, writing non-resident members, etc., should be done weeks in advance. Many of the techniques and materials for promoting the present Church Attendance Crusade could be used.

Special posters, newspaper stories, and advertisements should publicize the program. Some radio and television time might be procured. Billboard posters, auto bumper stickers, window stickers, etc., saying, "Give God a Chance Now! . . . Attend Church Every Sunday," are available from TIDINGS.

Letters with Spiritual Life covenant cards should go to all non-resident members, including those in college, in the armed services, etc. Letters of notification should also be mailed non-resident members needing to transfer their membership where they live.

Following the initial promotion, mail each week to every home of the membership and constituency a specially prepared church bulletin or paper promoting the services of the coming Sunday.

Ask members to report names of prospects on cards for that purpose placed in the envelope holders. As a reminder to his members to do this, one minister prints in each Sunday bulletin this brief notation, "Members of Tomorrow," followed by the number of prospects—the figure changing every week as additional names are turned in.

2. Register Visitors

Visitors should also be registered in every service. A psychological yet spiritualized technique, for recognizing and welcoming visitors in the services, and securing their names, is employed by a Nashville Presbyterian minister. He simply states that many visitors are present and he and his church desire to extend greetings. He asks every visitor to stand. While they are standing he offers a short and friendly prayer, thanking God they have honored this church by their presence and asking divine guidance for their lives through the coming week, etc.

The writer shall never forget his own feeling of warmth toward this minister and church during these few seconds of unintimidating, yet sufficient, recognition. Evidently, the minister had posted and primed his people for that moment, for at the close of the service a number of persons greeted the writer, several suggesting that he fill out the visitor's card attached to the pew. These people were watching the visitors during that moment of recognition and prayer. How skillfully did that minister accomplish his purpose and yet without a break in the spirit of worship! That was good evangelism.

The minister should send each visitor whose name is secured a letter of greeting and welcome to future services. If the person appears to be a good prospect, he should be visited that week.

3. Reach Inactive Members

One of the best techniques I have found for the reclamation of inactive members and the deepening of the spiritual life of the church, and one that should be a part of this Lenten Evangelistic program, may be called "The Pastor's Prayer Period." (For suggestions for this Period, see the box on next page.)

Encourage all your members to spend this period in prayer, or at least to devote one minute to prayer during that time. If your church has tower chimes, play the hymn, "Sweet Hour of Prayer," at the beginning of the prayer period.

The church should be left open during Lent for prayer and meditation. Keep this announcement constantly before your people. An electric cross and candles should burn at all times, if they are part of your altar furnishings.

By all means, request of every group that no parties or social functions be held during the Lenten season.

4. The Holy Habits Stressed

FIRST SUNDAY—CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Designate the first Sunday in Lent as "Go-to-Church-Sunday." In two previous pastorates the writer observed an annual Go-to-Church-Sunday with elaborate preparation and promotion. In both instances the attendance and enthusiasms broke all records. In one church with a membership of 800 the attendance that day was 1300. We actually got 90% of our resident membership to church plus an overwhelming majority of our constituency. On this first Sunday the emphasis should be on the Holy Habit of Church Attendance.

On this day invite every person to make a Spiritual Life

Covenant, using the Spiritual Life visitation with the visitors trained by the Spiritual Life Evangelism Chart, "Strengthen Thy Brethren."

SECOND SUNDAY—PRAYER

The second Sunday in Lent should feature the Holy Habit of Prayer. On this day attach to the church bulletin the folder, "Alone with God," or the leaflet, "Some Secrets of Prayer."

THIRD SUNDAY—FAMILY DEVOTIONS

The third Sunday emphasis should be Family Devotions. On this Sunday the Committee on Spiritual Life would include with every bulletin Ferré's leaflet "Strengthen the Spiritual Life Through Family Devotions," and the current issue of THE UPPER ROOM, with printed suggestions for using THE UPPER ROOM in private and family devotions. This committee would also be responsible for an attractive literature rack in the foyer on all Sundays.

FOURTH SUNDAY—BIBLE READING

The fourth Sunday emphasis should be on Bible Reading. Distribute some of the fine American Bible Society materials and a suggested schedule for daily Bible reading. The M.Y.F. might secure one of the American Bible Society films for its evening program.

FIFTH SUNDAY—TITHING

The fifth Sunday emphasis should be on Tithing with every person challenged to try tithing over a designated period of time. Several fine tracts and leaflets are available on this subject. Announcement should be made on this day of the Easter offering for benevolences or an Advance Special assumed by the local church. This would be the only special offering during the period. The Commission on Missions and Finance should collaborate in planning this offering.

SIXTH SUNDAY—WITNESSING AND VISITATION EVANGELISM

The sixth Sunday would be Palm Sunday and the appropriate day for the sixth Holy Habit, Witnessing. This service would also be the kick-off for Visitation Evangelism during the first half of Holy week.

The membership class of children and intermediates which has been in progress for several weeks would be received that day. The minister would conclude his sermon on Witnessing by commissioning his evangelistic visitors who have been previously and painstakingly selected by himself and the Committee on Visitation Evangelism. Visitation would begin that afternoon, as is the U.E.M. plan, and continue Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights, making the four periods suggested by the turn-over chart. The suppers for the visitors should be arranged for these three nights. By ending visitation on Wednesday night, Thursday night would be free for a church-wide Holy Communion, and Good Friday for special observance services.

On Maundy Thursday plan to visit all your shut-ins and serve Holy Communion. The writer has done this for a number of years, arranging a schedule and writing each shut-in and giving the approximate time of his visit. Of course, it should be made clear that if the stated time is not convenient to the home, another hour can be arranged.

One minor weakness in our Visitation Evangelism is the absence of instruction on what to leave in event the family is not at home. These calls should not be wasted. Provide your visitors with "door knob cards" telling the family that some friends from the church called and they will return at a later date. These are available from TIDINGS. Also leave a church bulletin or some appropriate leaflet or booklet.

SEVENTH SUNDAY—EASTER

Easter could well be a glorious Victory Day with recognition of all who had made commitments and transferred their membership.

5. Membership Sunday, Pentecost

Immediately following Easter the Pastor's class on membership should start for all who made commitments during the Lenten season. It might run until Pentecost Sunday, which could be Membership Sunday. (The Program of Recognition for new members will be discussed in the next issue of SHEPHERDS.)

Sunday Night Lenten Evangelistic Services

The Sunday night services afford a grand opportunity for a series of Sunday night evangelistic services running parallel with the Spiritual Life emphasis. All publicity and promotion should include these Sunday night services. They should be planned in advance with some great evangelistic theme running throughout the series of sermons, and each service should close with an invitation to accept Christ. The altar hour used so effectively by many churches could also be a definite part of the invitation. There are a number of suggestions for making these services attractive—using

The Pastor's Prayer Period
Suggestions for Its Organization

The pastor should announce to the congregation on several successive Sundays that on each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during the Lenten season he plans to spend a half hour—8 to 8:30 A.M.—at the church altar in prayer. He will pray for the members of the church and their families, calling their names and praying specifically for them and their problems. The minister will include a number of families in his prayers each day and will notify each family prior to the day it is included. The pastor should ask the family to join him in prayer at this time—coming to the church to kneel with him if possible, although this is not a condition for being remembered.

Although it is not announced as such, the strategy should be to include the inactive members first, and if possible to get them all in the first six periods (two weeks). Check carefully the church roll and compile a complete list of inactive members.

On each Thursday write a personal letter to each person or family to be included the next week. Explain the plan and tell when each will be remembered. Ask for specific requests and suggest that these can be turned in on Sunday.

Divide the membership so that each family can be remembered at least once during the Lenten season. No names should be made public, but the plan should be kept before the people through the bulletin and public announcement. The plan will produce inestimable spiritual results and aid in the total evangelistic program.

youth and children's choirs, a men's chorus, etc. Special group nights, the pew-captain plan, etc., will work well for promoting attendance. The ushers committee should arrange for special greeters at the door.

For Easter Sunday night, feature a great Easter musical program, or one of the fine religious films suitable for that season. Palm Sunday night might also be used in this way, but make these services evangelistic.

Enlisting All Church Groups in Evangelism

If a tape recorder is available, the morning services should be recorded and played for each of the shut-in members. Here is a splendid project for the Home Department of the Church School.

Another Lenten project should be a survey of the families of the church by the Nursery Department with the aim of contacting every family with unbaptized babies and small children. A special infant baptismal service could be planned as part of the Easter morning service for those preferring that occasion. Another possibility is a special infant baptismal service at another hour on Easter. By all means, certificates of baptism should be presented and each child enrolled as a preparatory member.

These projects, along with the promotion of church school attendance, should be planned in advance by the Commission on Education. This Commission, through the Church School Workers Council, would also cooperate in surveying the church school rolls for prospects.

The W.S.C.S., the Methodist Men, and the M.Y.F. should also plan their programs to harmonize with and augment this total evangelistic effort.

It Can Be Done!

Planning for this full Lenten evangelistic program will not be easy, but it can be done if the minister and Commission start in time. The pastor might call a church conference and urge all leaders of all groups to be present. He could begin his presentation by reading this article, either fully or in condensed form.

A Circuit Program

Since many of our churches are on circuits with one pastor serving two or more churches, can this program be adapted to the circuit situation? CERTAINLY! It will, however, need to be spread over a longer period of time. It might easily become a year's program. A circuit pastor can organize this program by planning a special emphasis on every Sunday he preaches at each church. Thus, he can run the program concurrently in all his churches. Should he desire to give personal direction to each church, some adjustment would have to be made regarding visitation. Otherwise, he might secure the help of other ministers or train some of his key laymen for this responsibility.

Interdenominational Possibilities

Such a Lenten evangelistic program also has possibilities on an interdenominational, community-wide basis with all churches of the community doing it simultaneously. One is thrilled with the realization of the ecumenical purpose that could be achieved by such a cooperative effort, even though each denomination makes its own characteristic approach.

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by Bishop Costen J. Harrell

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Please do not order either of these from Tidings

A Man Gives Himself to God

A Spiritual Life Mission was under way at East Lake Methodist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. At the conclusion of the Sunday morning service the guest preacher said to the pastor, "What a beautiful sanctuary you have!"

The church is new, built at the cost of more than a million dollars. The pastor said, "You might be interested to know that one of our own men was the architect. His name is George Pierce. He watched with loving devotion the placing of every stone, and the driving of every nail to make this church building. And more than that, he turned back every cent of the architectural fee to be used in the building of the church."

The guest preacher remarked that the church was fortunate in having such a man. Then the guest preacher said, "I want to congratulate you also on your wonderful choir. It is one of the finest chorus choirs that I have ever heard."

"You might be interested in knowing that George Pierce is the director of our choir," said the host minister. "Music is Mr. Pierce's hobby, and he gives his time without compensation for the development of young singers, and for training them in the singing of the great music of the church."

"That's a remarkable thing," went on the guest minister. "I want to tell you also that I so much appreciated that solo which came right after the morning prayer. We were all brought close to the presence of God by the manner in which the solo was sung, and the voice was magnificent."

"Well, now," said the host minister, "You will be surprised to learn that George Pierce was also the soloist. He has a magnificent voice, and he uses it each week for the Lord."

As part of that Mission the church was having morning services at 7:00 o'clock each day. One morning at 6:30 the guest minister entered the sanctuary and noticed a man on his knees at the altar. Going forward, he found that it was George Pierce who was bowing in that quiet place at that early hour.

Later that day the guest minister talked with George Pierce. Pierce explained that life had not always been like that, but that he had come to a day when he had felt that God was calling for him to surrender his life, all that he had. He said that each day since then he had arisen in the early morning to kneel and ask God's blessings upon the day, and to offer his talents and life to be used in building the Kingdom in any way that seemed best during the hours of that day.

The example of George Pierce became the power which called many other church members from the temptation to be inactive to give their best for the Church and for the Kingdom.

The "Cop" Gets the Ticket

We were driving along when the police car drove up and sounded its siren. We pulled over to the side of the street. When the officer came up, he said, "You're in a hurry, aren't you?"

We said, "Yes, sir, we have some important things to do this evening, but we were not aware that we were exceeding the speed limit."

After taking our name and address, he inquired if that address was not next to the Central Methodist Church. I told him that it was the parsonage. Then I said, "Since you are here, can you tell us the location of the street where this prospect lives?" I handed him the prospect card, and he explained to us how to reach the street. Then I continued, "You see, this evening we are calling on people who might be interested in our church."

He replied, "Well, I am a Methodist."

"Good for you," I responded. "Do you belong to a church here?"

"No, I don't."

"Have you thought about joining one of the churches in this city?"

He said that he and his wife had talked about it several times.

"Well, why don't you do the thing you have been intending to do, and let us send for your church letter?"

He answered that his wife was not a member of a church, but that she would join with him. We took out a commitment card. He asked us to fill it in for him, extending us the use of his offense board for a pad and his flashlight for a light, promising that he and his wife would be in the service next Sunday. We welcomed him as a new member. In leaving, he said that he was not going to make any ticket, but warned us about the danger of driving too fast on a rainy evening. We apologized for so doing, and thanked him for calling it to our attention.

Presuming that the interview was over, we drove on, but soon found that he was in front of us, giving us police escort to the home of the prospect we were looking for. When we drove up in front of the prospect's house, he told us that he would be off duty the next day, and that he and his wife would be at home and would appreciate a call from us.

God Works in Mysterious Ways

In a certain community the basketball game held practically all the visitation evangelism prospects of the evening. But the pastor and his helper decided to try one call, anyway. The prospects whom they chose were a man and wife.

Just as the visitors drove up to the house they saw the man leaving with a bag. They called to him, and he stopped. Sensing that he was impatient to be on his way, however, the pastor said that his companion and he had come from the church for a short visit, but that they would return at a more convenient time.

At this the man turned back and invited them into the house, where they found the wife in tears. Sensing again that something was wrong, the pastor and his associate immediately put the couple at ease by offering to help in any way they could. Then they stated the object of their call, whereupon both husband and wife broke down and told of their trouble.

The couple had decided to dissolve their marriage, and the husband had hastily gathered a few clothes and was leaving home when the visitors drove up. Skillfully and sympathetically the visitors pointed out the only way in which this man and wife could save their home and happiness. And the Holy Spirit, as always, did His work. In a few minutes the four of them were upon their knees, and the pastor suggested tactfully that the husband and wife join hands for the prayer.

In this attitude of humility and reverence, both confessed their wrongs and accepted Christ as Saviour. The home was saved. For the first time in months, happiness and peace reigned over that household!

A Professor Finds God

A Spiritual Life Mission was under way in the college church at the site of one of the largest state universities in America. At the conclusion of the final service a man approached the guest preacher to ask if it would be possible to have a personal interview. In a few moments the man related the following experience:

"I am the head of the Department of Economics of the State University," he said. "For the past several years I have been subject to periods of mental depression. They have come several times during the year, and left me with such feeling of despair that it was difficult for me even to attend my classes. Last summer I was under the care of a psychiatrist. He saw me three times a week. At the end of the summer it was his opinion that I would no longer be a victim of the periods of depression.

"But about a month ago I was once more faced with these moments of black despair. Last Sunday morning my wife attended the morning service which marked the beginning of the Spiritual Life Mission. When she returned from service she urged me to attend with her in the evening saying, 'I think that there is something in the Missions which might help you.'

"I have been attending each night this week. I am a member of the church, but have not been attending for several years. I am one of those people whom you call inactive members. But I recognize that there is something in the Christian faith which I very much need. You say that the strength you need comes from the experience of the presence of Christ. Would you tell me how I could get it? What do I have to do to gain the personal strength of which you have been speaking?"

During the next few moments the preacher explained to the economics professor the steps which are necessary in developing the spiritual life. He talked of confession, and of surrender, and of the daily cultivation of the spiritual life. In the automobile that night the professor and his preacher friend bowed in a moment of prayer, and life began again for that man because he had met Christ in a Spiritual Life Mission.

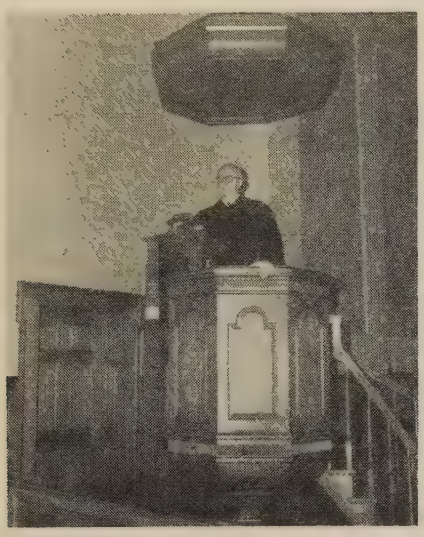
A Faithful Servant

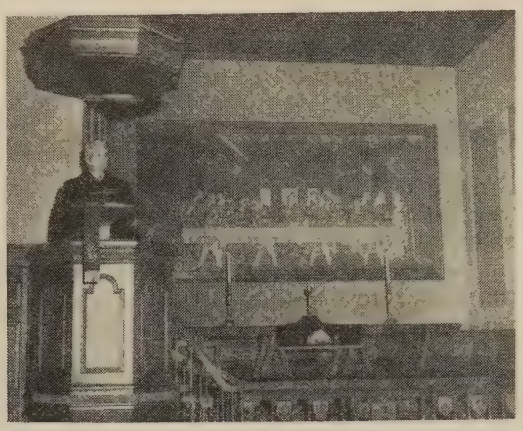
Several years ago a group of boys in their early teens attended a revival service. It was Saturday afternoon, and the preacher's sermon had been none too effective. Nevertheless, the boys' Sunday school teacher, making her purposed way back to the last row of seats where the lads were sitting, went from one to the other asking them life's most momentous question: "Will you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?"

All refused except one freckled-face chap, 12 years old, who went forward to kneel at the altar. In a few minutes he was converted. There was peace in his boyish heart and a contentment of mind in knowing that he had answered the appeal to receive Christ as life's best Friend.

No one thought that later this lad would be a preacher of the gospel. But the call to the ministry came. He answered that call, too, and now writes this line of testimony in gratitude to a faithful Sunday school teacher who sought to win her class members to Jesus Christ.

Three Bishops Among Recent Speakers in The Upper Room Chapel





Bishop Donald H. Tippett, San Francisco Area (left), Bishop William T. Watkins, Louisville Area (right), and Bishop Roy H. Short, Nashville Area, have been recent speakers in The Upper Room Chapel. The Upper Room Chapel continues to attract hundreds of visitors each month from all over the United States and from other countries. Many church and church-related groups are also arranging special worship services in the Chapel where the beauty and significance of the setting help to create a never-to-be-forgotten worship experience.

The Upper Room Stimulates My Visiting

by Marcius E. Taber,
formerly Pastor
East Leroy—Newton—Sonoma,
Michigan

I have a suburban parish in two townships where many families are moving because of lower living costs, a desire to build their own homes, etc. There is a big turnover of residents in the area, but we do have some excellent homes and some very stable family situations on which to build.

I have built up a constituency list of over 300 families of all degrees of contact and interest in the church. I have an addressing machine, personally owned, and I have a file of stencils for these families, arranged alphabetically by churches.

I use this file in planning the distribution of The Upper Room. I use the list to supply the names for gummed labels. Then I let some volunteer help attach them to the bottom of the back cover of the copies so that the label is just barely on the cover. I arrange the copies alphabetically in boxes and carry the boxes with me on my calls, making brief calls and leaving copies. This gives me an excuse and an urgency for brief calls or a brief stop at neighbors of those whom I call on for a longer period. It does give evidence of personal attention, which I find is appreciated.

Last evening I got a phone call from a person to whom I had intended to take a copy of The Upper Room in a day or two. She asked if I had a copy for her. Though not members of the church, she and her husband are regular attendants. They had missed church for two Sundays, so they drove about seven miles each way to get their copy of The Upper Room so they would not miss a day's reading. And they called on the pastor, for a change!

The last two Sundays of each month before an issue is due, I have them at church and Sunday school and have them passed out to families whom I have not already visited. If more copies are desired or persons show up whose names are not on our list, we have a few extra copies available for them, too. We have some copies of the smaller pocket size to send to service men or those away from home.

The letter that I enclose in each copy says something about family worship, church attendance, etc. The returns in the coin envelopes about equal the cost, and I am constantly running across people, especially when I call, who say that they had intended to get the envelope to me, but here is 50¢ or $1.00 to go on the fund. The church underwrites any loss.

I find that this system stimulates more calls by me and also gives an opening for conversation about religious matters. Some confess little reading of The Upper Room, but they usually go on to say that they ought to read it more, or that they use it in family worship. I pass on suggestions people give me as to how they use it.

A grocer has a copy of The Upper Room under his counter to read at spare moments "when I need a lift." He is not a member of my church, or of any church, but the copy he had indicates much use. A lady tears out pages from The Upper Room and thumb tacks them to the curtain near the place where she irons and glances at them as she works for reminders of the thought for the day. Another lady has The Upper Room by the telephone. Two metal clips hold it open and she reads when waiting for answers or for the line to be open. We are on rural lines and they are often busy. Another lady fastens a copy up near the bathroom mirror so the man of the house gets a chance to glance at it while he lathers his face for shaving. Occasionally I have seen some pictures from The Upper Room mounted on appropriate construction paper on walls of rooms. I have also seen them on bulletin boards at several schools. These are in addition to more "orthodox" uses.

How to Create an Evangelistic Atmosphere

by A. C. Archibald

Ohio Baptist Convention Secretary

PASTORS ARE ASKING, "How can I create an evangelistic atmosphere in my church?" Every true church of Christ must always major on evangelism. And yet in some of our churches the very word evangelism is disliked. How may we go about creating an evangelistic atmosphere where it is lacking? Surely, we cannot expect souls to be born again in a frigid anti-evangelistic atmosphere.

Atmosphere is requirement number one. The horticulturist. with utmost care, provides his plants with just the temperature they require. To attempt evangelism, even by most effective methods, in a church that has no evangelistic atmosphere is as futile as to attempt the growing of date palms at the North Pole.

The ultimate achievements in our evangelism will not be measured in terms of organization, leadership, or literature, but in our ability to create in the local church, large or small, city or rural, a genuine atmosphere of soul-winning.

How can an evangelistic atmosphere be produced?

Importance of the Pastor

1. The pastor stands in the key position. He must prayerfully, humbly, and sacrificially accept it as his responsibility to produce an evangelistic atmosphere. No other individual can change the atmosphere of his church. To say, "My church is not evangelistically disposed," is no justification for leaving it so. Churches can be changed. The test of a minister's value to his congregation lies largely in his ability to reconstruct the thinking and attitudes of his group. It may cost him much. If he is unwilling to pay a price, he forfeits his claim to leadership. A true minister reconstructs his church, when this is needed.

A great mid-west church, with a million dollar plant, in recent years has undergone a transformation. Every physical appurtenance of its building suggests social position, the temptation to contentment, self-satisfaction, apartness. But the pastor took fire, and his flame was a pilot flame that set other fires burning in his congregation. This changed church went out and in one week of Visitation Evangelism won over 150 people to Christ and the Church. A fresh interpretation and application of what Paul had in mind when he said, "That I may save some," can save the modern church.

Inspiring Evangelistic Zeal

2. How can a pastor take a church that has lost its vision and passion for souls and so reconstruct its life that there will be out-reach, up-reach, and down-reach for the souls of men until such an attitude becomes the normal expression of the church life?

(a) Begin by putting evangelism first in the church program. Evangelism will live in first place, or it will live only feebly, if at all.

Without the evangelistic emphasis in the pulpit, there will never be any in the pew. Unless pastors are willing to preach for souls, earnestly, passionately, winsomely, our laymen will never experience the evangelistic desire or impulse.

(b) Negatively, there are some things that will not produce the evangelistic atmosphere. It cannot be done by turning pulpits into forums of theological debate. Correct creedal belief is not evangelistic passion. Creedal discussion may divert a church from its central task and leave only hardness that hurts the spirit of unity, warmth, and sweetness, so vital to soul winning.

Nor is the evangelistic atmosphere nourished in any church by making the pulpit a platform for ceaseless discussion of divers social, political, and international issues. Neither is the atmosphere of evangelism stimulated by eliminating the things within the church that foster the spiritual growth of people, such as the services of prayer, Bible study, and devotions.

(c) The church that would recover the evangelistic atmosphere must maintain within her life those agencies which feed the evangelistic spirit. The prayer meeting in many churches became moribund; so it was killed. By hard work, fresh thinking, and new approaches, it might have been saved. But neither pastor nor people would pay the price. So it died. And when it died, one of our major agencies to undergird the spirit of evangelism perished. With the dying out of the prayer meeting, the prayer emphasis in all our organizations declined.

Need for Prayer

Put prayer back in the heart of the church program. Let it again make its demand upon the time, strength, and devotion of our people. One of our churches in New England a few years ago discovered it had lost, somewhere along the way, all zeal and interest in the redemption of men. The prayer meeting had died. A young minister came to the field. He began by reorganizing the mid-week service. He set

up the kind of service that had no precedent, but was deeply devotional and spirit-feeding. He boldly challenged his people to pray. The atmosphere in his church was completely changed. Today it is one of our most fruitful evangelistic churches.

(d) *Build into the life of a church the doctrinal basis for evangelistic conviction and action.* Evangelistic churches are created out of evangelistic truths. There is a definite body of gospel truth whose impact may be termed evangelistic. Should a church fail to have those truths imbedded in its thinking and feeling it will inevitably fail of the evangelistic atmosphere. True evangelism in a church is the product of the preaching of the great central truths of the gospel.

Great Central Truths

Dr. John English used to tell his Newton students, "Gentlemen, preach the great central truths of the gospel; they will make you great preachers and your churches life-saving institutions." Is not the failure of the evangelistic atmosphere in many of our churches the product of preaching only on peripheral truths?

What are *the evangelistic truths of our gospel*—such as will arouse conscience, quicken responsibility, and stir the will to action? There is the Being of God: His character and His purpose. Yet a middle-aged preacher said to me, "I have never preached on God. I have preached about Him and His work, but never on Him." Then there is Man and his deep necessities: his sin, his helplessness, his sorrows, his total inadequacy when left alone. There is the "person of Jesus": His passionate concern for men, His purpose in coming, His devotion to salvation that produced the Cross. There is the work and mission of the Holy Spirit in conversion, regeneration, upbuilding. There is the eternal truth of the part man has in his own salvation, and the vast incompleteness of human personality without Christ. There is also the emphasis upon the destiny of mankind.

Need for Information

3. The evangelistic atmosphere can be cultivated by publicly and frequently explaining how one can begin the Christian life and enter into the fellowship of the Church. That may involve merely an invitation to meet the pastor at the close of worship; but *repeated* it keeps the sense of expectancy toward the unsaved before the people. Should not every church make it known at every service on Sunday that the door is open for all who may wish to enter?

Make much of the frequent presentation of evangelistic truths in the Sunday church school. If the children and youth catch an expectancy toward the necessity of decision, later in maturity they will support the evangelistic appeal in the church itself.

The evangelistic atmosphere may also be enriched by the appointment of special meetings to pray for the unchurched of the community. We tend in our interest to follow the leading of our prayers.

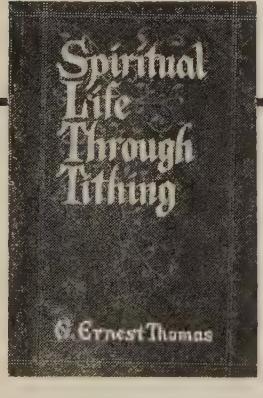
While there may be much difference in interpretation of doctrines, there is no difference among us regarding the vital necessity of all men coming to God through Christ. Christ is our gospel. Our gospel is not primarily the preaching of hell, judgment, condemnation. It is first of all a proclamation of *Good News.*

Spirit of Evangelism

I entered a large church in the midwest one Sunday evening. It was a beautiful church, architecturally. A glorious choir led the singing. The whole atmosphere was shot through and through with the spirit of evangelism. The pastor was preaching from his heart. His topic was "The Insistence of the Savior" or "The Seeking Christ."

At the close of the service he appealed to any who might wish to walk the ways of life with Christ to enter a little room at the rear. Six mature people went in. As I went out a gentleman, whom I found to be a commercial traveler, said to me, "I hope your heart was with us. It is a lovely sight to see people turning to God." He went on to say, "It has been my ambition now for two years to win a soul to my Lord each week."

That church was a veritable runway for souls into a new life. It was the first and supreme thing in that church. The atmosphere was there. Thank God there are yet such churches; yet such preachers; yet such laymen.



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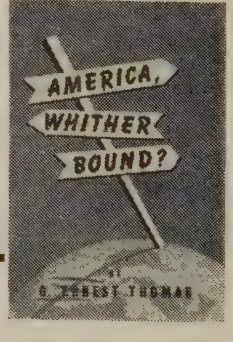

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We Held an

Interdenominational

Community Evangelistic Crusade

by Everett H. Staats
Pastor, The Methodist Church
Villisca, Iowa

ONE of the great needs of the average American community today is a strong, effective, evangelistic appeal that will challenge the entire community. All too often, it seems, this kind of appeal is made principally in large cities where well established interchurch councils employ the services of "big names" in a short term, high pressure campaign. An ordinary town realizes it cannot compete with cities in the higher strata of reaching the thousands. Consequently, many communities have gone for years without a united evangelistic effort.

Such was the case with the community of Villisca in southwestern Iowa. But, where it was unable to reach the thousands for Christ, Villisca can now attest to the fact that it is possible to do an effective work among the hundreds. Villisca's answer to the need for community-wide evangelism was found in a Community Evangelistic Crusade.

Three pastors, comprising the Villisca Ministerial Association, agreed that if any one of the churches conducted its own evangelistic program, however sincere and intensive the effort might be, there would be only limited results. Upon learning of the assistance offered by the Methodist General Board of Evangelism in community evangelistic methods, they decided to merge their efforts and invite two nearby rural villages to participate in a larger community-wide evangelistic crusade. A request to the General Board was immediately fulfilled by the offer of leadership in the person of Eugene E. Golay, then head of the Department of Community Evangelism. He was invited to give guidance early in the Crusade and serve as preacher during the Mass Meetings, scheduled in early September.

The churches participating in the Crusade were the Villisca Methodist, Presbyterian, and Advent Christian churches, also the nearby Grant Methodist and Morton Mills Community Church.

Advance Preparations

Advance preparations were begun six months before the Crusade. Mr. Golay came to Villisca twice, to meet with the pastors and laymen from the five participating churches. He placed in the hands of each person a complete outline of recommended procedures that could be adapted to meet local conditions. His experience and leadership gave confidence to the local committee, upon whose shoulders rested the major responsibility.

The following Crusade committees were appointed: Spiritual Preparation, Religious Census, Mass Evangelism, Publicity, Youth, Special Activities, and Finance. Local church committees to implement the program were Spiritual Preparation, Visitation Evangelism, Attendance and Promotion, and Spiritual Life. This latter committee was to serve as a follow-up for new converts and members. Dennis F. Neal, businessman and leader in the Advent Christian Church, was elected General Chairman of the Crusade. The writer of this article was named director. Other officers, all laymen, were elected: J. Calvin Anderson, Secretary-Treasurer; Howard Cooney, Spiritual Preparation; L. A. Moser, Religious Census; Marlin Gunderman, Mass Evangelism; Orville Marsh, Special Activities; and, Paul Williams, Finance. Rev. Mr. Bodwell was in charge of publicity. Ministers serving throughout the Crusade were Elliott T. Bodwell, Merle A. Robeson, Frank Dennis, Herbert Anderson, Everett Staats.

Covenant of Prayer

The Spiritual Preparation Committee first called the five congregations into a Covenant of Prayer. This call was issued simultaneously in all the churches Sunday morning, June 12. An exceptionally fine Covenant Card entitled "Prayer Circles," provided by TIDINGS, was used by all the denominations.

Next came the work of the Religious Census Committee. Directed by a Presbyterian layman, it met several weeks in advance to study maps, and divide the 150 square mile area to be canvassed into working sections. Post office employees, rural mail carriers, and service-truck men who knew every residence, road, and lane in the area assisted the committee.

On Sunday afternoon, July 19, 175 workers met after church for a dinner and instructions before taking the census. That afternoon fully 80% of the calls were completed. Within a few days the entire census was ready for processing. Each cooperating church received typed copies of the total findings of the survey. This gave every church a complete picture of the religious potentialities of the entire community. It also provided pastors with a working basis for future church ministrations with families of mixed and sometimes delinquent loyalties.

Again the Spiritual Preparation Committee came into the foreground of activity and set up 80 prayer groups, to be held in homes two days a week prior to the Mass Meetings. These inter-church prayer circles proved to be one of the most successful features of the crusade. Hostesses and leaders for all circles were appointed and given instructions and

guidance. Since most of them were conducted on Tuesday and Friday mornings, the circles were attended almost exclusively by women. There was an average attendance of more than 200 each day.

Meanwhile the Special Activities Committee arranged for Businessmen's and Farmer's Luncheons to be held once in the week prior to the meetings, and again during the week of meetings. A mid-morning Prayer and Bible Hour was set up for the week of services.

The Publicity Committee gave effective news coverage in local and nearby weekly papers for eight consecutive weeks. Posters were placed in every public window. Window stickers bearing the Crusade motto, "Give God A Chance," were placed in every Villisca home by members of the Youth Fellowships. Three Radio Interview programs over station DFNF were arranged for as many weeks leading up to the close of the campaign. The best-attended service in the week of Mass Meetings was also broadcast over the same station.

In the week prior to the Mass Meetings, 25 visitation evangelism teams met for supper training sessions, then went out to call in homes of prospective members. From about 100 homes visited, more than 50 persons made commitments for membership in the several churches. This phase of the Crusade was found to be so fruitful that a permanent visitation program has been set up in each of the churches for monthly visitation during the fall and winter.

Mass Meetings

The Mass Meetings were conducted the week of August 30 to September 6 in the local Armory. This building was selected to provide a neutral meeting place, and because not one of the churches was considered large enough to accommodate the anticipated congregations. The Mass Evangelism Committee transformed a Drill Room into a sanctuary. An inspiring altar arrangement was designed by Mrs. Virgil Boyer. Each night a faithful corps of ushers assisted in creating a friendly atmosphere. A Mass Choir composed principally of youth from the churches provided special music nightly.

Bible-centered messages each night were delivered with a persuasiveness that proved an inspiration to many. As the meetings passed the mid-way point, "My Advance For Christ" covenant cards were distributed each evening. When the final dedication service was conducted scores of persons came forward to signify new decisions for Christ and register renewed covenants. Twenty-three additional persons covenanted to accept Christ and unite with the Church, 85 persons rededicated their lives to Christ, 98 agreed to pray daily, 56 families decided to practice family worship, and 75 more said they would have grace at meals. Thirty-nine persons covenanted to practice tithing, many also registered decisions for Daily Bible reading, church and church school attendance, and to invite others to Christ. There were several decisions for full-time Christian service by youth.

These accomplishments have dispelled the fear and misconception that "nothing can be done in the summer time." And, for other rural communities, let it be noted this Crusade took place during the season of County Fairs, State Fair, and a week-long county centennial observance.

A businessman, who had been turned against evangelism earlier in life, stated that the Crusade had brought evangelism back into high regard after a 25-year absence of interchurch efforts.

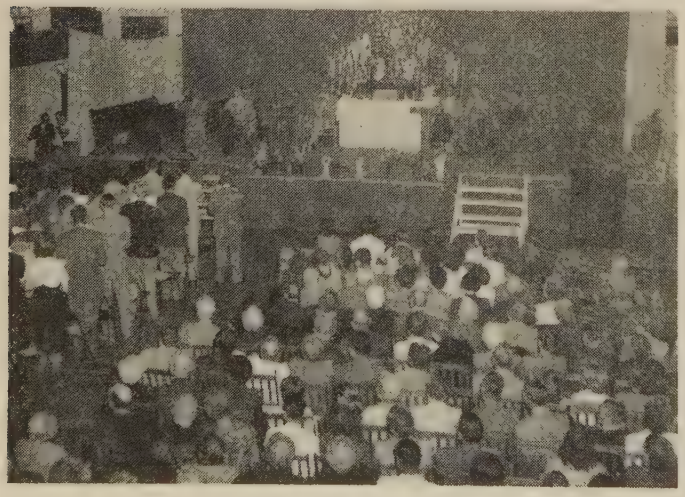
The Influence Lingers

According to the calendar of events, this special effort is ended. But its influence lingers on in the hearts of many and in the renewed interest of churches. Many have commented on the fact that more was done through the Prayer Circles, the Religious Survey, and the Visitations, to further the cause of interchurch relations in Villisca, than a lifetime of occasional and seasonal union services. Members of the several churches who knew each other as "members of another church," now understand each other better. They have a new faith and confidence in one another that was not previously known. One person expressed this opinion, "Even if we had not gained a single new member, this Crusade has been successful because it brought together men and women from all the churches in a common effort for Christ."

As for finances, offerings taken during the public services cared for all local expenses, and a special envelope offering was received for the General Board of Evangelism, which furnished us the leader. Because of this efficient plan, expenses were at a minimum. The entire Crusade was conducted without overemphasis on the dollar. A small balance remains in the treasury.

Though it is a rural community of only 1,800 people, Villisca is persuaded that any small community can carry out an effective program of evangelism by these methods. It heartily recommends a "Community Evangelistic Crusade" as the answer to one of the greatest needs of the average American community.

A portion of the Thursday night congregation in the Villisca, Iowa, Community Evangelistic Crusade.



The sponsoring committee for the Crusade.

EVANGELISM IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

By

Luke G. Beauchamp

Department of General Church School Work
Division of the Local Church
General Board of Education

(This and the following article adapted from a booklet, *Evangelism in the Church School*, available from the Board of Education)

BY EVANGELISM we mean the winning of people to Christ and to membership in the church. We believe in the affirmation of our Christian faith that the Gospel is the good news which God had made known to men through Jesus Christ. It is news that God loves men, that He seeks to redeem men, that He offers them salvation from sin and a way of more abundant living. It means that the love of God is available to all. Acceptance of the love of God places responsibility on Christians to witness to this good news and to make it known to their fellowmen. Evangelism in the church school is getting persons to commit their lives to Christ as Saviour and to join the Church.

Viewed from this angle, evangelism is an integral part of Christian education. It deals with commitment and loyalty to Christ. With some individuals the consciousness of commitment may come gradually as a product of many decisions in specific situations to follow Christ. These decisions should climax a decision to acknowledge publicly the commitment to Christ by joining the Church. With some persons it may be a sudden and dramatic heart-warming experience, while to others it may be a process of natural growth that comes to fruition in a declaration of loyalty to Christ. The process whereby the individual is led to make decisions to follow Christ in specific situations is educational. The fact that it has led to commitment is evangelistic. It is the teacher's job to lead persons in making the decision for Christ, acknowledged publicly through word and deed.

Commitment to Christ is the heart of the redemptive task of the Church. The work of Christian education includes and goes beyond this basic decision. In addition to commitment, it seeks to help persons become effective members of the Church and workers for the cause of Christ in the world. In doing so, it recognizes the laws by which people learn. It seeks to create those experiences by which they may gain insights into the Christian way of life and assume larger responsibilities. The teaching task can be therapeutic and redemptive. People may have their attitudes changed as they participate in the Christian fellowship. Persons may be renewed in spirit as they meet together and the spirit of Christ has an influence upon their souls. The educational process is continuous. It seeks to relate the Christian way of life to the continuing experiences of persons from the smallest child in the nursery to the oldest adult in the church school.

The records show that the church school has a great opportunity as an evangelistic agency. In 1952, a total of 180,918 persons came into Methodist church membership through the church school on profession of faith in Christ. The ratio of approximately six out of every ten additions to the Church coming through the church school persists year after year and indicates the crucial importance of the church school in the work of the Church.

Even with this continuing ratio, however, in 1952 over a third of our church schools reported no church school members joining the church.

The Scope of Evangelism

How much do we include in this work of evangelism in the church school? It is usually stated that the church school's task in terms of evangelism is to:

Lead people to accept Christ as Saviour, to commit their lives to the doing of the will of God, and when sufficiently mature to join the church;

See that all officers and teachers are trained for their work in evangelism;

Work with the pastor in plans for special evangelistic services for youth and adults;

Interpret to church school members the meaning of church membership;

Hold a church membership class each year for children, youth, and adults.

The Church School Superintendent

If the church school members are to be led to Christ and the Christian way of life, the church school superintendent is the person who has specific responsibility for seeing that everything that takes place under his administration will encourage people to make decisions for Christ and church membership. This he will do with the cooperation of the Commission on Education in the local church.

The Teacher as an Evangelist

In what sense may we call the church school teacher an evangelist? If the church school teacher is satisfied only to present Biblical fact and information with no purpose beyond that, we could hardly call such a teacher an evangelist. If, however, the teacher is willing to become the channel through which vital religion may flow into the hearts and lives of open-minded and responsive boys and girls, youth and adults, then surely this teacher is an evangelist.

Such a teacher has a purpose in the imparting of the Bible facts and information. The purpose is that there shall be a response on the part of the class members in the nature of a commitment to Christ.

The Adult Teacher and Evangelism

by M. Leo Rippy

Director, Department of Christian Education of Adults

Division of the Local Church

General Board of Education

WHAT makes a teacher an evangelistic teacher in addition to one who explains the meaning of words?

The evangelistic teacher has committed his life to Christ. It is the purpose of his life to share his understanding of God's word with others. This understanding is quickened by the spirit of God. His experience enables him to speak with authority. The very spirit of God reveals deeper insights to him than intelligence alone can give him. The Ethiopian was a well-trained man, an important official of his country, yet, that which he read was a mystery to him until Philip, a follower of Christ, lifted the blinds and opened the windows of his mind and he understood.

The evangelistic teacher stands before his class a transformed man by the power of God. He is a new creature in deed and in truth. He has seen the light that lighteth up the way of life and lives therein. He teaches by the impact of his whole personality. He teaches that which he has experienced.

The evangelistic teacher is sensitive to the voice of God. The angel spoke unto Philip. He heard the message. He knew it was for him. He was meeting with success in his preaching to the Samaritans but the Lord spoke to him and he obeyed as an evangelist would hear and obey.

The evangelistic teacher puts his trust in the Lord. He does not have to see the end result of his teaching. It is his privilege to obey the will of God. He knows he should be a teacher. He has heard the call. He proposes to teach by studying the word of God so that he will have the information needed. He prays, gives, and works that the Spirit will permeate the information he interprets, and bring convictions.

The evangelistic teacher, because of his concern for people, will try to get those who have not done so to accept Christ as Saviour. Twice or more often during each year he should plan for and conduct a commitment service. The pre-Easter season is a good time for this. He should consult with his minister and members so that what he does will be a part of the church plan.

It goes without saying that he should know the members of his class. How can he teach to meet needs unless he knows his class members? A hit-or-miss method is not enough. Specific efforts related to certain individuals are productive.

The teacher may meet his responsibility for the commitment service in the following ways:

By teaching a course on "What Does It Mean to Be a Christian?" to his whole class for a period of six to eight weeks. He would set aside the regular study materials. At the conclusion of the study he would present a challenge to all the class members to accept Christ. It would be well for those who had made this commitment years ago to make it again.

By conducting a commitment service one or more times during the year.

By getting the minister to come to the class and conduct the commitment service.

By getting all class members to attend the special evangelistic services or other services when the minister would make an appeal for adults to commit their lives to Christ.

If teaching is not to help adults commit their lives to Christ, it loses its power to change lives, and the major purpose, to bring about changes in the lives of people, is not realized.

The evangelistic teacher is anxious for the members of his class to join the Church. He should not hesitate to ask them to join his church. This emphasis should be given special attention after any commitment service. Christian people are expected to join some church. They should be encouraged to do so. The teacher and class will cooperate with the minister in this matter.

The evangelistic teacher is concerned about guiding his class members in the Christian way of life. It is not enough to stop with a commitment service, the purpose of which is to get adults to accept Christ as Saviour. Other commitment services are needed.

There are great Christian principles which, if applied in individual and group relationships, will change the community. Community issues, politics, education, health, recreation, housing, labor, gambling, vice, etc., need to be settled by applying Christian principles. The evangelistic teacher will not ignore them. Teaching about meeting civic responsibilities is not enough. The teacher can bring his teaching to a focal point by calling for a commitment to do something about the issues. The class may appoint a committee to work out steps to be taken. When this is done, teaching takes on a new meaning. Not only are lives changed, but the community becomes a better place in which to live.

The evangelistic teacher is challenged by the world. He looks out on a world that is in great need. People are lost, bewildered, and without hope. War threatens to destroy the world. Homes are disrupted as boys and husbands are called to war. The peoples of the world are crying out, "To whom shall we look for salvation?" The evangelistic teacher answers, "To Christ the Saviour of the world." Because of his faith in God he speaks with assurance. Because of his experience he speaks with authority. He knows—he has experienced it. He sets forth to teach, hearing the call of God and responding to the need of man. He is a messenger whose life has been transformed and whose message is from God.

WINNING ADULTS

for Christ and His Church

1 It is time to start a new young adult group

Study your church. Find out—

- how many young adults under thirty years of age there are in your church that your church school is not reaching
- whether a new young adult group has been organized within the past four years
- how many married couples in their twenties live in your town
- whether parents of nursery and beginner children are attending young adult groups
- if you have only a few young adults and a large number of youth, whether these persons could be combined in an older-youth-young-adult group

If these possibilities appeal to you, it is time—

- to help these young adults discover the real fellowship they may enjoy with other Christians
- to guide them in discovering the aims of the church as it works with young adults
- to start them on the pathway that leads to vital Christian living
- to help them face community issues in a Christian way

Act now!

- Some church leader should call together three or four young adults and guide them in planning for a group
- That leader might be the pastor, the church school superintendent, the superintendent of the adult division, someone appointed by them, or three or four young adults themselves
- The new classes may meet in a church school classroom or in a home
- The new classes may meet Sunday morning, Sunday evening, or some evening during the week

2 It is time to start a new adult class

Study your church. Find out—

- how many adult members in your church are not members of some adult class
- how many couples you have that are not in a class
- whether all the parents of primary, junior, and intermediate boys and girls are in adult classes
- whether a new couples' class has been started in the past six years
- whether your adults support the church by attending, serving, and giving

If these possibilities challenge you, it is time—

- to help adults grow spiritually
- to teach adults Christian beliefs
- to help adults achieve Christian homes
- to help adults enjoy a wholesome social life
- to teach adults to serve, give, and attend church services

Act now!

- Someone should call two, three, or four couples together and guide them in planning
- That person might be the pastor, the church school superintendent, someone appointed by them, or two or more interested couples
- Where can the new classes meet? In a classroom in the church or in homes
- When can the new classes meet? Sunday morning, Sunday evening, or some evening during the week

3 It is time to start a group of older adults

Study your church. Find out—

- how many adults over seventy years of age there are in your church
- how many other older adults there are in your community that your church should serve
- what your church is doing with older people
- what experiences and abilities older people can share
- whether you have a class for older men and women
- whether most of your older men and women participate in church activities or whether most of them stay home—waiting

If these possibilities appeal to you, it is time—

- to help older adults live abundantly
- to help older adults develop a Christian philosophy of life for old age
- to help older adults have meaningful worship experiences
- to help older adults achieve a wholesome social life
- to help older adults meet their civic responsibilities
- to bring older adults into a sustaining Christian fellowship

Act now!

- Someone interested in older adults should call together two or more older adults and start a group
- That interested person might be the pastor, the church school superintendent, the superintendent of the adult division, or the director of the church's work with older people
- Where can the new group meet? In a classroom, in a home, or at the parsonage
- When can this group meet? Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon, or some other morning or afternoon

4 It is time to start and improve work with adult home members

Study your church. Find out—

- how many shut-ins belong to your church
- how many old people are confined to yards and in-doors
- how many parents of young children cannot attend church
- how many church members are not interested enough to attend
- how many work on Sundays

If these possibilities appeal to you, it is time—

- to go to these who do not come
- to take Christian teaching and fellowship to all
- to serve those who need help most
- to maintain contact with all members
- to interest all members in attending whenever possible
- to give each person an opportunity to serve
- to change the inactive into active members

Act now!

- The director of the work with home members should survey the field
- The director should appoint an assistant to work with each group of home members, or each geographical section of the community
- The workers should visit and enlist others to visit home members
- The director should see to it that the publication needed by each group of home members is provided
- An aggressive effort should be put forth to enroll all those listed above as home members

5 It is time to win adults to Christ

Study your church. Find out whether—

- you have adult classes whose members have not committed their lives to Christ
- a continuous effort is put forth to enroll non-church members in your adult classes
- members of adult classes are encouraged to attend preaching services of your church
- adult classes cooperate with their pastor in evangelistic efforts
- each adult class has a commitment service

Time is running out. The undertow is carrying people to destruction. If you are deeply concerned about people, you will agree. . . .

It is time—

- to challenge adults to live the Christian life
- to bring non-church members into your class
- to lead members of adult classes to support their church in all its work
- to teach in order to bring about changes in the lives of adults
- to teach to get each adult to make a specific commitment of his life to Christ
- to teach in order to bring about changes in the social order

Act now!

- To get decisions to the Christian way of life
- Who should get decisions?
  Each class member should present the challenge of Christian living
  The teacher should teach expecting adults to change
  The teacher should feel personally responsible for leading each non-church member to accept Christ
  Class members who are members of out-of-city churches should be encouraged to write for their church letters
  The teacher should relate the Christian religion to the issues of everyday life
- Where should decisions be made?
  On streets, in homes, in class sessions, in the church, in the community, at work, wherever the individual may go
- When should decisions be made?
  NOW, today.

From a brochure prepared by
Department of Christian Education of Adults
Division of the Local Church
The General Board of Education of The Methodist Church
Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee

A Helpful Leaflet on the Church

Why I Joined the Church

by Homer T. Fort

$2.00 per 100

This stirring tract by the pastor of First Methodist Church, Beaumont, Texas, presents a personal testimony to the rich experiences associated with church membership and attendance. Excellent for distribution at any time. Particularly appropriate for use in connection with your Church Attendance Crusade.

1908 Grand Avenue TIDINGS Nashville 5, Tennessee

To Help Build Your

Church Attendance

Letterheads, 8½ x 11 inches

75¢ per 100

Letterhead says "Church Attendance Crusade" and contains "Give God A Chance Now" emblem, and another brief statement.

Printed Letters, 8½ x 11 inches

$1.00 per 100

On the above letterhead, an appropriate letter is printed, ready for signing and mailing.

Automobile Bumper Strips

19x4¾ inches
50 for $6.00

These Bumper Stickers are two colors, one color being the famous "Day-Glo" paint. Sold only in lots of 50.

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Transcription record for use by radio stations, containing brief spot announcements concerning the church and church attendance. Nondenominational.

Billboards

$10.00 each

Large 24-sheet roadside billboard posters containing two-color "Give God A Chance Now!" emblem.

Order From

TIDINGS

1908 Grand Avenue

Nashville 5, Tenn.

Significant Membership Figures

by Albert C. Hoover

Methodist Statistician

Chicago, Illinois

As NATIONAL CULTURE is in grave danger of becoming pagan, so is Methodism's spirit in danger of becoming stale. When a Church loses its mobility, its desire to explore, and its thirst for redemption, then it has lost its prophetic words and redemptive works. If it cannot commit itself with joyous abandon to a program of prayer and work, then it is in danger. Should it cease to be pilgrim in a world like ours, it will have little of which it can boast. The Church cannot have evangelism without first being evangelistic—"evangelism" may be only a program, "evangelistic" will be a passion—and to be evangelistic will keep alive the spirit of an active Christian fellowship which attracts by its warmth, generosity, and genuineness. There must be evident bonds of a holy partnership where clear visions and sacrificial devotion make Jesus Christ an object of knowledge, of love, and of obedience.

If not what a man earns, but what he saves, makes him rich, it is just as true that not the gains but the excess of gains over losses makes the Church numerically strong. Counting income, accessions, assets, without calculating outgo, shrinkage, or liability, is exceedingly poor accounting. The Church membership rolls need a frequent audit covering such matters as are in their nature purely statistical. The number of accessions is being balanced by losses almost as great and even greater.

A year ago there were 1,624,466 persons somewhere in the United States who have been Methodist members and are still believed to be alive, but whose present whereabouts and church connection, if any, is not clear. Methodism this year will report a slight but tragic decrease. Completed 1953 totals for the Western Jurisdiction show a net loss of 14,000 (2.72%) over last year. We salve our hurt by saying, so complacently, that our rolls are being cleared of so many who have lost interest and concerning whom there seems to be but little chance of revival. The "actives" and "inactives," by General Conference action, are this year being combined into one total. Many names are being dropped without the required Disciplinary action. For the next two years even a larger number may be dropped when those who follow the *Discipline* will reduce their totals. It may be argued that we are not losing strength, that we haven't had the strength of the inactives for years and thus to decrease our rolls does not indicate we have lost anything but a statistic.

However, persons are being lost from our records. We lose enough potential strength each year to keep a hundred churches in a thriving state of endeavor could they but be made alive. If our possessions have any material or aesthetic value at all, we take good care of them. One doesn't just lose an auto, a cow, a dollar bill, a gallon of gas, without doing something about it. Nor do we wait for a handed down remedy. But we can lose a dozen members from a congregation and no one is the wiser! It doesn't make much difference which year we lose them, they're gone, that is what is important. Perhaps we received them too hurriedly—that sin has often been committed. Perhaps we forgot them as soon as they joined—that, too, has been to our discredit.

It took, on the average, 28 people 12 months to win one new person for the church school. We'll not win America for Christ very soon at that rate! We show impressive transfer totals, but we need new folk who at the present time belong nowhere. Our record of "removed by transfers" is even more amazing, and our "removed to other denominations" out-distances those "received from other denominations" only by 30,000.

Sooner or later one comes to ask, "What difference does it make?" It may make all the difference in the world to the individual whether he is in or out of the Church. But our statistics will make no difference at all unless we know that with so many millions on our church roll, the life of the United States is so far from being Christian. With so much efficiency everywhere, we still lack effectiveness. With so many of our churchmen in Congress, our legislative life stumbles along at an embarrassingly low level.

The sooner we accept the truism that numbers alone will not save us nor impress others, the sooner we are likely to become agents through whom the will and Spirit of God can work.

The Church's Responsibility t

by
Charles I. Carpenter
Chaplain (Major General), USAF
Chief of Air Force Chaplains

ONE MILLION young men and women came into the military service last year. One million young men and women were discharged from the military service to return to civilian life. The same thing will happen each year for some time to come even though the member of service personnel will vary each year. A big problem with which the Christian Church is confronted lies between the entrance of these young people into the military service of their country and their discharge for return to civilian activity.

The impact of military life on the spiritual commitments of these young men and women is being transmitted to all our communities and to all our churches. What can be done to assist these young people to maintain their spiritual commitments during these days in which they serve in the military forces?

Religious Opportunities

Churches of America have sent groups of their ministers as chaplains in the armed forces. They will give of their leadership and time to make the opportunities of religious worship and of religious counsel available to these young service people. But a few chaplains cannot carry the full responsibility for the spiritual life of so many. The off-duty time and the off-base time comprise the area in which the profound problem for sound guidance is to be found.

We must realize that today young people in the military service go into every part of the world. Countries and cities about which they once read and dreamed have now become the common roadway along which they will tread in their performance of military duty. They become temporary residents of the Scandinavian countries, England, France, and Germany, of North Africa, Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines. They are assigned to military combat in Korea.

In some of these countries our young Americans oftentimes live among a population uncommitted to the Christian teaching. This means that the moral standards of these people are entirely different from those in America. It means also that the living conditions are different. These differences are going to make an impact upon the lives of American youths who, within this environment, are going to spend a part of their "growing days." And, as these young people are discharged from the service and return to their home communities, they will show in their new, "adult" lives the influence of their recent experiences during their service in foreign countries.

We of the Church should be asking ourselves if our program for youth has been geared to meet the problem of Christian young people living in countries where the standards of life are so completely different from those in America. What are we doing to aid Christian youth to prepare itself to meet the problems brought into life by military adventure into this world-wide area?

It is a fact that the armed forces of the United States have definite programs prepared with the purpose of making every opportunity available for the men and women of those forces in foreign countries to find recreation and entertainment within the military installation. It is equally a fact that the young people of America in the armed forces serving in foreign countries will be moving out into the local communities searching for an opportunity to learn more about the community in which they are serving. We shall not, as a Church, have begun to fulfill our complete obligation to Christian young people until we have a planned program, both to prepare these young people spiritually for their experiences in international living and to maintain a strong hold upon them while they are passing through these experiences. The Church has a definite obligation to fortify the youth of today to meet the problems with which they will be confronted in countries in which the Christian message is oftentimes not the guiding factor of life.

We have written great amounts of literature, either for presentation to young people entering military service, or for discussing the problems created by the military emphasis today. Much of the literature is still on the shelves of our warehouses. Local churches have not made use of it. The local leadership should use this available material, as well as develop plans through which continuous contact could be maintained with its youth.

A Great Missionary Team

As these young people go everywhere in the world in the military service, they become the greatest missionary team of the present-day Church. If they are able to live as Christians should live, they show the reality of Christianity as it is represented in America; and, at the same time, they represent Christianity in greater numbers than all the individuals that we have ever been able to send as missionaries to these foreign countries. We may be sure that the natives of the countries in which these young people live learn to understand America more rapidly by the attitudes and behavior of American youth than in any other way.

The Church needs, then, through its Boards, to consider the fact that these mission teams of young people in the military forces can either contribute to the strength of our missionary program or completely destroy all the work that our missionary program has done.

The Church also needs to consider the possibility of attempting to minister to these American young people when they are off their military installations within these foreign countries. Even as today we attempt to care for

ne Service Man

them in the local communities near the military installations in the United States, so also we need to consider the possibility of utilizing our missionaries in the foreign countries to contact, and, if possible, to hold steady in their Christian teaching the youth who will be living on the military installations near the mission stations.

Many of the missionaries that we have overseas, though highly trained for the missionary work among a foreign population, are not trained for this type of mission work among our own Americans. Consideration must be given as to the responsibility of the American Church toward Christians serving overseas.

Keen Observers

An added factor is that these young people are keen observers of the mission work of the Church in all the areas into which they go. They will return to their local communities either as definite supporters of our missionary program or as severe critics of our failures, if such there be, to meet the best standards of missionary endeavor.

In all its phases, the question of the young man or woman in military life is one that should, at the present time, demand a large share of attention of the organizations of the Church. These young people not only present to us the question of the salvation of their own souls and the maintenance of their spiritual standards through our endeavors but also represent a guide to the future effectiveness of Christianity in America and the world with their observations and understanding of the Church's failure or success in bringing the message of Jesus Christ into all areas of the world.

These are problems which not only confront the Church in its national sense but which are of importance to the local church. Each local church must have in the armed forces numbers of its youth. There should be within that local church a program tying those young people close to the home church, no matter how far they go in the military service of their country.

Already time has been wasted in meeting this problem. Already we have failed to seize the advantage that has been given to us in this type of ministry. We should wait no longer. The challenge now is for the Church to face the reality of youth within military service, to expend its finest efforts through its organizational life to prepare its young representatives to live as Christians in the many environments into which they will go in their capacity as military personnel, and to define a program of activity that will tie the Church close to these people and bring them back to their local communities, loyal to their church and loyal to their Christ.

THE UPPER ROOM

by

Shenton Lodge

(reprint from *The Daily Press*, Newport News—Hampton—Warwick, Virginia)

When a family devotional periodical reaches a total circulation of nearly three million copies it is not mere chance. Even the most effective promotional activities could not reach such results of themselves, and the reason for its success must be sought within the pages of the magazine itself.

Now the world's most widely used devotional guide, it is called THE UPPER ROOM, and in addition to the American edition, it is circulated around the world in 17 foreign languages. It is also published for the blind in English Braille.

Phenomenal Growth

Founded in 1935 by Grover C. Emmons, it met immediate success with a first edition of 100,000 and, in the last few years has experienced phenomenal expansion under the editorship of J. Manning Potts.

One has only to read any issue of THE UPPER ROOM to realize that its success constitutes a merited reward for the value of its contents. Published bimonthly, each day's devotional has a page to itself presenting the religious thinking of scores of prominent men and women who have themselves found in their writing spiritual sustenance for the soul. One is led in its pages through the thoughts and prayers of Christians of all races and creeds to personal and family meditations which provide a helpful lift for each day.

The family altar has long been in danger of disappearing from the American scene, and we have been missing something vital and important to better living in its passing. The Sabbath and the family altar were potent factors in the life of the family and the nation in the days of our forefathers, but we have let them slip, foolishly, under the persistent encroachment of secular affairs and interests. As a consequence, the nation is not as close to God as it might otherwise be, and THE UPPER ROOM is doing much toward remedying the spiritual anemia of our people in that particular respect.

Add to the tremendous circulation of THE UPPER ROOM that of many similar publications now being used and there appears a widespread spiritual yearning for such devotional guidance. That this is increasing is evidenced by the fact that, since 1949, the circulation of the American edition of THE UPPER ROOM alone has increased by more than three quarters of a million copies. It seems that devotional guidance is something almost universally desired.

The American home is still a solid institution in spite of the strains which have been placed upon it during the war years and the perplexities of the confusing years which have followed it. Its strengthening depends largely on the further exaltation of family group life.

The majority of our homes are occupied by good citizens who are not unmindful of their moral responsibility toward community living, but too many of them have relinquished the religious observance inherent in family devotions, which may have some bearing on whatever religious confusion modern youth may be experiencing. American democracy was nurtured by the religious heritage of centuries which God-fearing men brought to our shores, but the spiritual ideals of that heritage should now be returned in larger measure to their old position of authority in family life.

It has been said: "America is great because America is good; when America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great." When our religion disappears from our homes, it will be gone from America. It will not be completely lost as long as the family altar remains a potent factor in the life of any household in the nation. In these troubled and uncertain days, we must realize that the moral and spiritual fiber of our society must be continually strengthened if we are to remain internally strong, for only the unseen, spiritual realities are eternal.

Valuable Contribution

To that end, THE UPPER ROOM is making a large and valuable contribution, along with similar periodicals, to the greatness of America. As a source of comfort and inspiration, it merits a place in every household.

THE MINISTRY OF THE UPPER ROOM

Five Years' Growth in Circulation

777,872

Circulation November-December issue

2,623,156

(figures apply only to English, English Pocket and Spanish editions)

Your church, too, can benefit through the ministry of Daily Devotions in every home.

THE SIMPLICITY OF CHRISTIANITY

by JOHN W. CERMAK, Pastor
Simpson Methodist Church
Bangor, Michigan

WHY is it that we seem to make hard work of living the Christian life? We find it hard to accept anything so simple. Yet it cannot be any other way.

The words of Jesus illustrate what I mean: "Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." In other words, this grave, serious, long-faced, solemn way of life—this complicated mass of machinery which we call the Church—has in reality only one simple working principle which the Master expressed when He said, "Follow me and win others to me."

Jesus insists that the spirit of His religion consists in following Him and winning others to Him.

Men get together and gravely consider their opinions of Him. They formulate these opinions and condense them into a single statement. This is their creed; this is what they believe. There have been many such creeds. And long and fierce have been the verbal battles fought over them! They have even resulted in religious, or so-called "holy," wars. Think of it! And all the while Christ has had but one simple working principle—one creedal test: "Follow me and win others to me."

A Simple Plan

Jesus' plan of religion was simple because there was none in a formal sense. He had no money, no influential friends, no organization. He created no corporate movement. Yet, singlehanded, in three short years, He launched a movement that has been the most revolutionary that the world has ever seen or known. He did it simply by getting a few men to follow Him. He did it by inspiring each one of them in his turn to persuade others to follow Christ's way of life.

Isn't this all very simple? "Follow Him and win others to Him." Yet how profound an impression Jesus left upon the world! How clear-cut has been His figure silhouetted against all history! We are, therefore, forced to draw the conclusion that, simple as Jesus' ministry was, He was more than human. He was divine.

A Fundamental Question

But the question arises: What can we expect from such simplicity? Surely, in this technological age, something more than these simple words is required. Yet as we examine other realms of accomplishment we see that simplicity is the beginning of greatness.

The alphabet is simple, composed as it is of 26 letters. Most any child knows them. Yet those 26 letters can be arranged into combinations that inspire and thrill and comfort. Lincoln wove them into the Gettysburg Address. Browning and Wordsworth have inspired the world with their writings.

The same might be said of the musical scale. How few the notes which comprise that scale, yet how great the masterpieces which those notes produce!

Or we might take the few basic colors which the cave man found in the soil. He clumsily mixed colors to daub and smear his first crude pictures on rocks. But he had laid hold of a priceless possession. Look what Michelangelo and Raphael and Rembrandt were able to do with those same colors when they used them to the fullest capacity.

Here then are the letters of the alphabet, the scale of musical notes, and a few basic colors. Not much—not very complicated to understand—yet, when all of their possibilities are brought into proper harmony, what miracles, what beauties, what blessings men receive down through the years!

The religion of Jesus Christ is as simple as the alphabet, as the musical scale, as the basic colors. But when its possibilities are all brought out; when, as a way of life, it is tried and sincerely followed, it solves for mankind all the intense problems of this atomic age.

The simplicity of Christianity is here: It regenerates and revives our world.

The simplicity of Christianity is also seen in the way it grows. Like a seed that is sown in the ground, the life of Jesus began to bear fruit. He said to one and then another. "Follow me," "Come work for me, as you worked for yourself."

One by one they rose and followed Him. He drew people toward Him.

Sometimes He spoke to great multitudes. Some turned away. But gradually a select group, who were to carry on His work, gathered to Him. Then, just as a firebrand ignites and spreads its flame wherever it is applied, His new words of life spread among men.

A Natural Process

It was a natural process, like a sower sowing seed. One man experienced it. He in turn felt compelled to tell someone else about it; and thus, by word of mouth, by personal contact of Christians with the world, the Kingdom of God began to grow. Thus the gospel spread throughout the Roman Empire.

This is the story of the early Apostolic Church. Each man who heard the message of Christianity tried to follow Jesus and win others to Him. It was a one-by-one movement. Every individual was afire with the "Good News." Every individual carried it to others. These individuals would not and could not be stopped. As rapidly as a Caesar put the fire out in one place, it broke out in another. It was like trying to put out a grass fire all alone when the wind is blowing. It simply gets out of control and away it goes.

Definition

What, then, does it mean to be a Christian? Let us go back to discover the real meaning of the word. Looking at the Bible, we find the true term Christian is used only three times in the whole New Testament.

First, we find it in Acts 11:26: "And the disciples were called Christians first

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TIDINGS

in Antioch." It means those who make it their business to be like Christ.

Second, we find it in Acts 26:28: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian." Paul had given his testimony as to what Christ had done for him, and King Agrippa was almost persuaded that this was for him.

Third, we find in I Peter 4:16: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him be not ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." Here it suggests one who is persecuted because he follows and spreads the ideals of Christ.

A Christian is simply one who believes in Christ and tries to live and act as Christ did. Thus, he follows Jesus and wins others to Him. This is the simplicity of Christianity.

A Beautiful Story

A beautiful and forceful story is told about Jesus as He returned to heaven at the close of His earthly life. Gabriel meets Him at the gate and asks, "What? Are you back so soon?" Jesus answers, "Yes, they allowed me to work only three years. Then they killed me." "Well!" asks Gabriel, "what plans have you left to carry on your work?" Jesus answers, "I chose a few ordinary men, and I tried to fill them with a love for men and my message. Then I left them with my message in their hearts so that they might go out and each in his turn win others."

Let us now add something to the story to apply it to our day.

"But," says Gabriel, "what will happen in about the year 1400 when the Church will have become top heavy with power, and the sale of indulgences threatens to destroy its very foundations?"

"Ah," answers Jesus, "a man named Martin Luther will save the day. I believe I can count on Him."

"But what about the year 1700 when England will be in a state similar to the conditions underlying the terrible French Revolution?" asks Gabriel.

"Well," answers Jesus, "I'm counting on John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield to help out then. And later on Francis Asbury will go to America to present my claims there."

"But what about the world of 1954?" asks Gabriel.

Jesus answers, "I am counting on ordinary individuals to do my work in all parts of the earth."

"But," asks Gabriel, "what if they should fail? What plan have you then?"

With a look of complete confidence, Jesus answers, "I have no other plan."

Leaflets to Use With

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by Bishop John C. Broomfield

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A Book of Devotions for Families with Young Children

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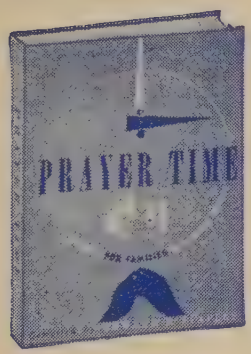

Compiled by Edward D. Staples

To provide family worship suggestions and materials that will make the experience of family worship real and vital to the younger members of the family is the objective of this book. The devotions have been gathered from scores of experienced writers in the field of children's work. The writers come from various denominations where they are teachers, preachers, parents, and leaders in work with young children The editor, Edward D. Staples, is Director of the Department of the Christian Family, Methodist Board of Education.

Parents of younger children will welcome this book with its more than two hundred suggested devotions. Twelve general headings help the parents find material needed for the particular day. *50 cents*

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To meet the insistent demand for a book of children's prayers that are charmingly reverent and inspiring, comes this delightful book that pleases the eye, warms the heart, and enchants the mind. The author has captured a child's joy and wonder and has emphasized God's love and care. *50 cents*

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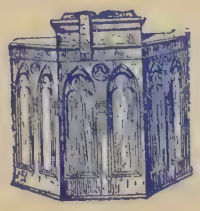

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Princeton, N. J.

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Ernest E. Logan
Gilford Presbyterian Church
Gilford Portadown, Northern Ireland

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T. Wayne Rieman
Manchester College
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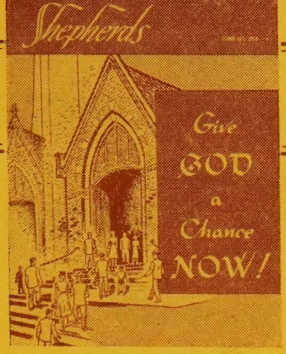


SUPPLEMENT TO SHEPHERDS

February, 1954

Made Honorary Citizen

During the New Orleans District Spiritual Life Mission, October 1-9, Dr. G. Ernest Thomas was made an honorary citizen of the city. He is shown here receiving the key to the city from the mayor, DeLesseps Morrison. Also present at the ceremony were guest ministers from the Baton Rouge District, who filled New Orleans pulpits during the Mission.

Christian Witness Mission for Leaders

The Christian Witness Mission for leaders, scheduled for Memphis, Tennessee, January 28-31, 1954, for training directors of Christian Witness Missions for 1954 will include two days of discussion, training and study, and two days of intensive field work in the forty churches of the Memphis District. **J. E. Underwood,** District Superintendent of the Memphis District, will be director of the Mission.

Bishop William T. Watkins is chairman of the executive planning committee which is planning a Conference-Wide Christian Witness Mission for the youth of the Memphis Conference for the fall of 1954.

C. N. Jolly, Executive Secretary, and **Clarence Hampton** are giving direction and leadership to the venture.

Wisconsin Conference Evangelism Retreats

West Wisconsin Conference promoted a series of evangelism retreats on the three districts, September 13-16, 1953. The purpose of the retreats was to train members of the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism and to deepen the Spiritual Life of the pastors, their wives, and commission members attending the three retreats, reports **Lee H. Holmes,** Conference Secretary of Evangelism.

City Convocation Called

Over 1,000 city ministers of The Methodist Church will attend a National Convocation on Urban Life to be held in Columbus, Ohio, February 24-26, 1954, under the sponsorship of the Division of National Missions, Department of City Work, **Robert A. McKibben,** superintendent.

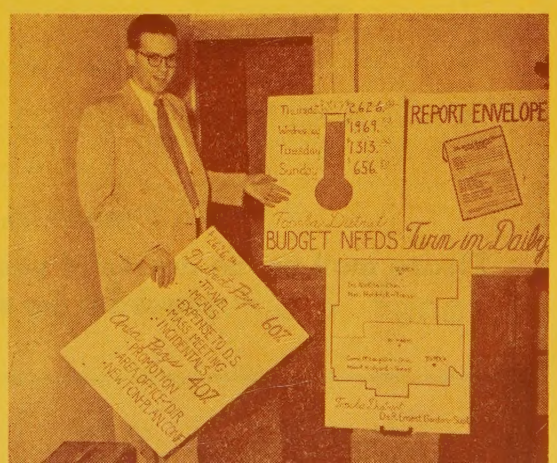
An over-all strategy of denominational and interdenominational teamwork, specially trained leaders, new skills, and a "deeper concern for the apartment house dweller, the underprivileged, the dispossessed and racially different" are aims of the Convocation as the Methodist Bishops have outlined them.

Plan for the conference, according to **Dr. McKibben,** is to stress successful experiences in modern city church life. **Bishop Frederick B. Newell,** of the New York Area, is chairman of the Bishops' committee on the Convocation, with **Bishop John W. Branscomb,** of the Jacksonville Area, as vice-chairman and **Bishop Glenn R. Phillips,** of the Denver Area, as secretary. Other bishops on the committee are **Matthew W. Clair, Jr.,** St. Louis Area; **W. Angie Smith,** Oklahoma-New Mexico Area; and **Hazen G. Werner,** Ohio Area.

Information on the Convocation can be obtained by writing to: Dr. Robert A. McKibben, Executive Secretary, Department of City Work, Division of National Missions, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, New York.

Harry W. Backhus, III, minister (left), and Walter G. Bangle, associate minister, of the Arlington Methodist Church, Arlington, Virginia, are shown receiving into the membership of Arlington Church, Mr. and Mrs. N. R. Staton, the 384th and 385th new members received for the Conference year ending September 30. Arlington Church, which has led the Virginia Annual Conference in winning new members for the last five years, has a present membership of 2,273.

"SEEING IS BELIEVING." Hobart Hilyard, pastor of East Topeka Methodist Church and treasurer of Topeka District U.E.M., stands in front of charts effectively used in the Mission.



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I am handing you the names and addresses of persons previously unreported who have been received into our church on Profession of Faith on or since Sunday, May 24, 1953, or will be within a few weeks after a period of training. We want them counted in the 250,000.

I understand that you will send their names and addresses to Chicago that they may receive sample copies of *The Christian Advocate*.

Please send me a Special Certificate of Membership, serially numbered for each of them.

I am enclosing 2¢ for each name (cash or stamps) to cover the cost of printing and handling the certificates.

Faithfully yours,

(signed) _____ Pastor

Address _____

Charge _____ District _____ Conference _____ Jurisdiction _____

Number of names furnished herewith _____

Amount enclosed (in cash or stamps) at 2¢ per name _____

Persons Received on Profession of Faith

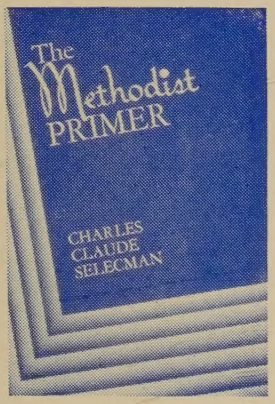
	Name	Address
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

(Attach another sheet for additional names)

Please mail us the names of your new members on profession of faith whether or not you want the special certificates indicated above.

Informed Members Make Active Members

Pastors and Commissions on Membership and Evangelism Should Give These Helpful Materials to All New Members



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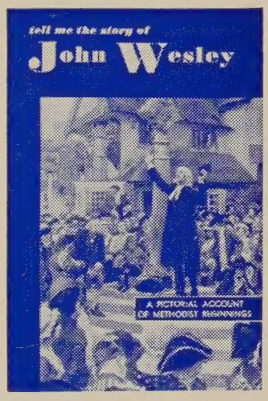

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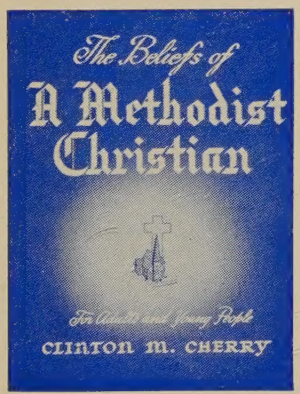

The Beliefs of a Methodist Christian

by Clinton M. Cherry

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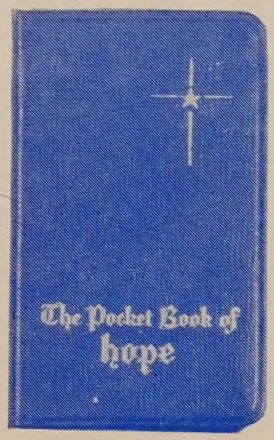

The Pocket Book of HOPE

By Bishop Ralph S. Cushman

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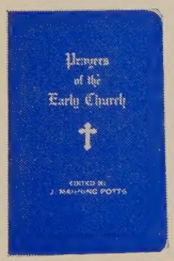

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Edited by J. Manning Potts

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